

**ECOLOGICAL ASSESSMENT
SUFFOLK COASTAL DISTRICT COUNCIL
COUNTY WILDLIFE SITE REVIEW 2009**

<i>Project no.</i>	<i>Report</i>	<i>Date</i>
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Contents

1.0 Introduction	1
2.0 Objectives	1
3.0 Methodology	1
3.1 Criteria for site evaluation	2
3.2 System of site ranking	2
3.3 Conservation value	4
4.0 Sites	
Martlesham	
Martlesham Common (north of Tesco's)	
Osier Bed and Martlesham Plantation Meadows (Little Bealings)	
Old Rotary Camping Ground	
Bloomfield's Farm Meadow	
Martlesham Plantation Acid Grassland	
Kyson Meadows (Woodbridge)	
Sluice Wood	
Martlesham Creek	
Kesgrave	
Kesgrave Wood and Sinks Valley	
Foxhall Stadium Wood	
Rushmere	
Rushmere Heath	
Ipswich Golf Course	
Tuddenham	
Pumping Station Meadow	
Foxhall/Purdis Farm	
The Mount	
Valley Farm Meadow	
Felixstowe	
Felixstowe Ferry – Golf Course and Ditch	
Kingsfleet	
Egypt Wood	
Trimleys St Mary & Trimley St Martin	
Painters/Salters Wood	
Morston Hall Wood	

Kirton/Falkenham

Kirton Reservoir
Paul's Rough Ground
Corporation Marshes (Falkenham)

Newbourne

Mill River
Newbourne Springs Meadow
Brightwell Grazing Meadows

Playford

Playford Alder Carr
Playford Reservoir
Lux Wood
Pogson's Farm Meadow
Playford Mere

Ecological assessment of County Wildlife Sites .

1. Introduction

SWT Ecological Consultants (trading as SWT Trading Ltd) was commissioned in 2009 by Suffolk Coastal District Council to undertake ecological assessments of selected County Wildlife Sites (CWS). A total of thirty one County Wildlife Sites (CWS) were surveyed in the parishes of Martlesham, Kesgrave, Rushmere St Andrew, Tuddenham, Foxhall, Purdis Farm, Felixstowe, Trimley St Mary and Trimley St Martin, Kirton, Falkenham, Newbourne and Playford.

Some of the sites selected have been designated in part for features that are apparent at times outside the scope of these surveys, such as spring flora or overwintering birds. Recommendations for further visits have been made for the following:

Kyson Meadows – winter visit to confirm overwintering bird populations
Sluice Wood – spring visit to confirm early flora
Osier Bed and Martlesham Plantation Meadows – spring visit to check management and early flora
Felixstowe Ferry – spring visit to check early flora
Egypt Wood - spring visit to check early flora
Morston Hall Wood – spring visit to check early flora
Brightwell Grazing Meadows - spring visit to check early flora
Lux Wood - spring visit to check early flora
Pogsons Farm Meadow - spring visit to check early flora

2. Objectives

The aim of the surveys was to provide:

- information and a description of the wildlife interest of each site
- highlight issues associated with the presence of Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) habitats and BAP & protected species
- a relative ranking of the current ecological value of the sites to wildlife
- identification of links between the survey site and adjacent sites of wildlife interest and the presence of any wildlife corridors.

3. Methodology

In order to achieve the overall aims of the project the following tasks were undertaken:

- existing digital information for each site was collated using data provided by Suffolk Biological Records Centre and from 1:10,000 maps and aerial photographs
- every site was surveyed and a record made of its conservation value
- photographs were taken of the relevant sites
- criteria and a ranking system was used to evaluate sites
- comments were made on habitats/species of wildlife interest
- ecological issues were highlighted.

3.1 Criteria for site evaluation

At each site of the five sites identified for full survey the following was recorded:

Habitat type: distinct, dominant habitat types were briefly detailed

Subsidiary habitat: this included additional habitats of particular note such as dead wood

Site description: a detailed account of the site

Size: the size was noted in hectares (ha)

Connectivity: if a site linked to other green corridors, this was noted and described in detail where relevant

Structural diversity: the differing vegetation structure (height) providing a variation in niche potential for a wide range of taxa was described for each site if relevant

Protected species: these were noted if recorded, or if previously recorded

Protected species potential: this was noted if the habitat was deemed suitable for named protected species

BAP species: these were noted if seen, or if previously recorded

BAP habitats: these were noted if present

BAP species potential: this was noted if the habitat was deemed suitable for BAP species

Flora, avifauna, herpetofauna, mammals, invertebrates etc: species seen or recorded were noted and habitat which offered potential for specific taxa was noted

Comments and recommendations: overall impressions of each site were noted and although detailed management recommendations were not part of the remit, these were in some instances offered and further survey work was recommended where relevant

Definitions

BAP species and habitats: priority species or habitats (usually those that are threatened, rare or declining in a UK or European context) that have been identified by the UK government in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (DoE 1995) amended August 2007. Local plans have also been produced for those priority species and habitats occurring in Suffolk (Suffolk Local Biodiversity Action Plans). In addition, habitats and species special to Suffolk have been identified and termed 'Suffolk Character Plans'.

Protected species: species protected by law under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, The Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations 1994 and the Protection of Badgers Act 1992.

3.2 System of site ranking

A system of ranking each site from the information gathered during surveys was established, using a simple numbering method. Numbers 1-6 were used (1 = high, 6 = low).

- 1 Statutory designation e.g. SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest) scheduled under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.
- 2 Non-statutory designation e.g. County Wildlife Site (CWS). CWSs are sites regarded as important in a county/regional context.
- 3 Non-statutory designation e.g. Local Wildlife Site (LWS), Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) species and habitats (except those that are locally common e.g. song thrush) and/or species protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981).
- 4 No designation but clearly of value due to size, connectivity, species diversity, potential for BAP and protected species and locally common BAP and protected species.
- 5 No designation but has some natural capital: is in character with the area (e.g. woodland), provides limited connectivity.
- 6 No designation and of no conservation value.

Site Ranking 1: Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs): the most important sites for wildlife within a national context. The criterion used to assess such sites has been developed by English Nature.

Site Ranking 2: County Wildlife Sites (CWSs): these sites have a high priority for protection. Although there is currently no statutory protection, all of Suffolk's local authorities have included a policy in their local plans to protect CWSs from development. The criteria used to assess CWSs have been developed by Suffolk Wildlife Trust, Suffolk County Council and Suffolk Biological Records Centre (SBRC) (The County Wildlife Site panel).

Site Ranking 3: Local Wildlife Sites (LWSs): sites which do not fulfil the criteria for SSSI or CWS status but have a high conservation value. These sites comprise the best examples of different habitats or are important for a particular species. The criteria for LWSs are:

- Non-recreatability. The sites must have some degree of naturalness
- Diversity and presence of indicator species. Sites that are less diverse than CWSs will be included. For example, grassland that is not a remnant of old meadow but has a good number of grass and herb species. Areas dominated by amenity grassland will not be included
- Rarity. Sites that contain habitats, plants and animals that are rare within the town but may be common throughout the county are included here
- Potential value. A number of LWSs are sites that have been neglected. These sites may have potential value once appropriate conservation management work is carried out. Some sites that could benefit from habitat creation are included, but only those that already have some conservation value
- Size. There is no minimum size for LWSs but sites that do not have a great diversity of species or habitats and contain no rare species are unlikely to be included if they are less than 0.25 ha
- Woodland. Many LWS are secondary woodland as all ancient woods are designated as CWSs. The exceptions are small sites that may contain remnants of ancient woodland within woods of more recent origin. All secondary woodlands with a reasonably diverse ground flora or containing some old woodland indicator species are included. Woodland strips and shelter belts are not usually included unless they fulfil the criteria of having a reasonably diverse ground flora. Any sites containing exceptionally old trees are included because of their wildlife value
- Scrub. Many LWSs include scrub habitat. Scrub is particularly important for breeding birds, particularly when it is adjacent to grassland and mature trees
- Grassland. Areas of grassland of some diversity that do not qualify as CWSs are included. These may represent recently established grasslands and areas of amenity grassland where soil type and management favour a more species-rich sward. Freshwater. Freshwater sites can include rivers, streams, ditches and ponds. Sites which contain a reasonable variety of aquatic or marginal plants are included, as are those with good populations of amphibians
- Created habitats. Some sites are included as LWSs which have developed from former arable or industrial use if they have a high diversity of species or are important for a particular species
- Species. Sites are included as LWSs if they provide important habitat for one or more of the following groups: invertebrates, amphibians and reptiles, birds and mammals. This includes Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP) species and habitats (except those that are locally common e.g. song thrush) and/or species protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981). Note: where species are of sufficient rarity or where there are exceptional populations, sites may be designated as CWSs or SSSIs.

Site Ranking 4 and 5: Other Sites of Nature Conservation Interest: sites which are less important for wildlife but still retain a degree of naturalness. Locally common BAP species such as song thrush may be present and also locally common protected species such as reptiles. However,

this ranking applies only in cases of low numbers of a single species and not significant populations of one or more species. (See LWS and CWSs).

In addition, these sites often provide valuable stepping stones and wildlife corridors along which species can travel between sites.

Site Ranking 6: Areas that are of limited or no value for wildlife: These may include built areas, large arable fields or regularly mown amenity grassland with no other semi-natural features.

3.3 Conservation value

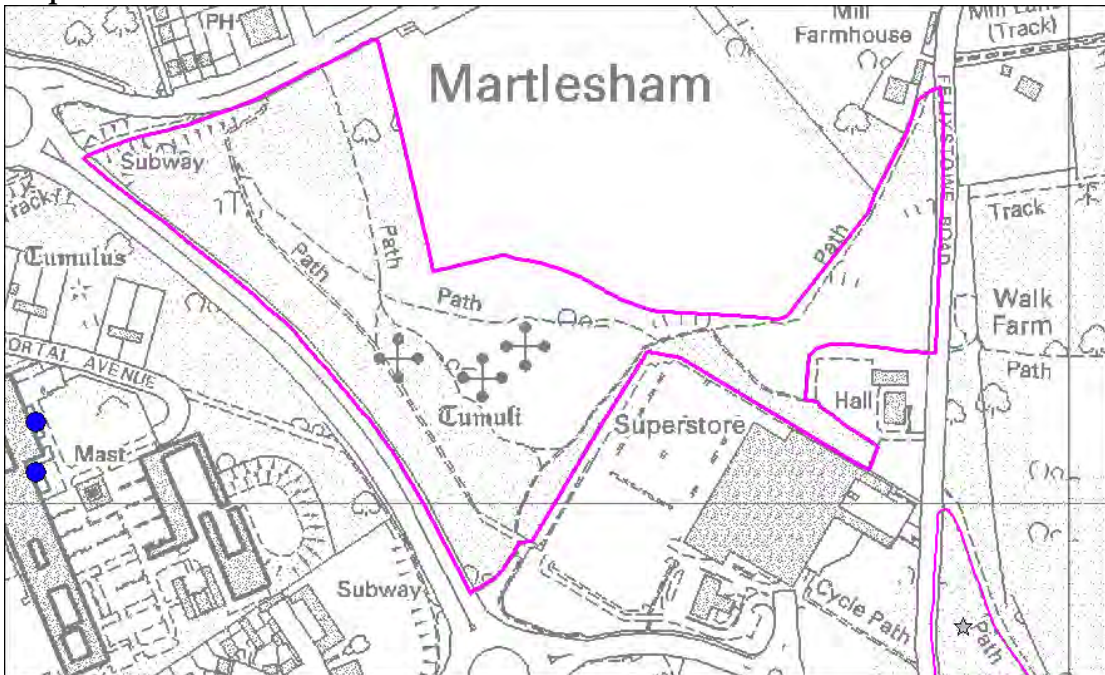
Linked to the ranking system is the method of establishing whether a site was of high, medium or low conservation value:

- 1-2 High conservation value
- 3-4 Medium conservation value
- 5-6 Low conservation value

Martlesham Common, north of Tesco

Site status	County Wildlife Site
Grid reference	TM 2457 4615
Location	Martlesham
Area	9.21 Hectares
Date	31 July 2009
Recorder	T Seagon
Weather conditions	Sunny, still, 25°C
Ranking	2
Biodiversity value	High conservation value

Map



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Photographs



Acid grass showing gorse and some bracken.



Large stand of bracken in eastern area of site

Habitat types

Acid grassland, stands of bracken

Subsidiary habitats

Broadleaved woodland, gorse scrub.

Site description.

A remnant of the Sandlings heaths to the east of Ipswich. This site is well used for amenity purposes but still supports a number of BAP species.

Protected species

Adder *Vipera berus*, viviparous lizard *Lacerta vivipara*

Stag beetle *Lucanus cervus* (limited protection)

Silver-studded blue butterfly *Plebeius argus* (limited protection)

Protected species potential

-

BAP habitats present

Lowland dry acid grassland

Lowland heath

Lowland mixed deciduous woodland

BAP species seen

-

BAP species known

Adder, viviparous lizard *Lacerta vivipara*

Stag beetle

Silver-studded blue butterfly *Plebeius argus*

BAP species potential

-

Connectivity

Moderate. There is development to north and south. Open land around Suffolk Constabulary headquarters to the west gives some permeability. One small section of the Common is on the east side of the Felixstowe Road and this is immediately adjacent to plantation woodland which leads on to arable land.

Structural diversity

Moderate. The northern section of the site has a mixed broadleaved woodland that grades in to open grassland/heath with gorse and bramble scrub along the western margin. This follows the line of the shod path that runs the length of the site. There is more, somewhat over mature, gorse scrub where the site narrows before it opens out again in to heath with stands of bracken.

Flora

Woodland to the north of the site has a lot of secondary sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus* growth but also boasts some old oak *Quercus robur* pollards. Other tree species in this area include rowan *Sorbus aucuparia*, beech *Fagus sylvaticus*, frequent silver birch *Betula pendula* and occasional elm *Ulmus Procera*. Some planting is in evidence but many of the saplings appear to have failed. The understorey is patchy with bramble *Rubus fruticosus* and nettle *Urtica dioica* phasing in to bracken *Pteridium aquilinum*. There is some honeysuckle *Lonicera perichlymenum* in the trees. Dead wood has been left.

Going south the trees give way to rabbit grazed turf with sheep's sorrel *Rumex acetosella*, wood-rush *Luzula* sp. and short heather *Calluna vulgaris*. Some bell heather *Erica cinerea* was also in evidence. A shod track runs down the west side of the site and the vegetation between this and the road was of thick bracken with rosebay willowherb *Chamerion angustifolium*. There is some silver birch encroachment but this is being managed as is the gorse *Ulex europaeus*. Where the site narrows the gorse has been kept back off the path but might benefit from further cutting back as it is becoming over mature and may be susceptible to catching fire.

Avifauna

The woodland offers roosting and foraging to a variety of common species and the following were noted:

Great tit *Parus major*
long tailed tit *Aegithalos caedatus*
Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris*
Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*
Robin *Erithacus rubecula*
Blackbird *Turdus merula*

Invertebrates

A 2003 coleoptera survey found 42 species including stag beetle and glow worms *Lampyrus noctiluca*. Although there is no water on site one large hawk type dragonfly was seen and the site would provide good foraging for this group, many of whom spend substantial periods of time away from water. There were good grasshopper numbers in areas with longer grass and a number of widespread butterfly species were seen:

Speckled wood *Pararge aegeria*,
Large white *Pieris brassicae*
Small white *Pieris rapae*
Gatekeeper *Pyronia tithonus*
Holly blue *Celastrina argiolus*

Herpetofauna

The site supports adder and viviparous lizard. The lack of water makes it unsuitable for amphibians or grass snake *Natrix natrix*.

Mammals

Signs of rabbit *Oryctolagus cuniculus* were noted and fox *Vulpes vulpes* will also probably be present. Common small mammals are likely to utilise the edges of the site. Mole *Talpa europaea* hills were present adjacent to the roadside where it is likely some enrichment of the soil has taken place.

Comments and recommendations

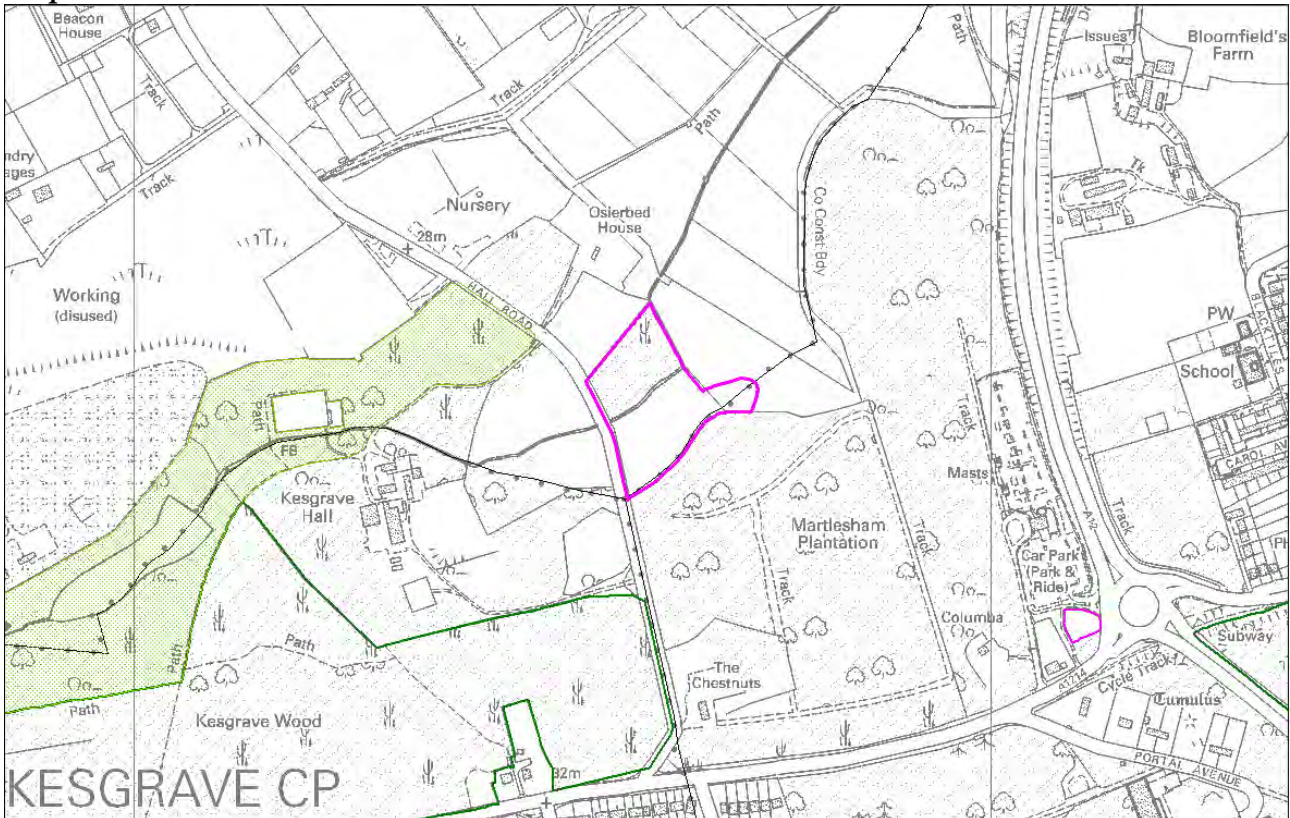
Management of the site is undertaken by the Greenways Project on behalf of the Parish Council. James Baker of the Greenways Project advised that the site is soon to be entered in to a Higher Level Stewardship agreement .

The field immediately adjacent to the CWS to the north east has been left fallow and is developing a varied and interesting flora. This site was part of the audit undertaken by Suffolk Wildlife Trust for Suffolk Coastal District Council in 2008 (Specific sites 599 and 742 Martlesham). At the time of this visit a number of skylark *Aluada arvensis* were noted using this field. The possibility of reptiles colonising this site as mentioned in the 2008 report will have increased. Any future plans for this area should take in to account the biodiversity already in situ and the impact any future use will have on the sensitive semi-natural habitats surrounding it.

Osier Bed and Martlesham Plantation Meadows

Site status	County Wildlife Site
Grid reference	TM 2363 4654
Location	Little Bealings
Area	1.95 Hectares
Date	18 September 2009
Recorder	T Seagon
Weather conditions	Overcast, still, 18°C
Ranking	2
Biodiversity value	High conservation value

Map



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Photographs



Dry woodland with no ground layer, ivy on most trees



Coppice at edge of wet meadow.



Dense stands of sedge in lower, wetter portion of meadow



Looking east across meadow area

Habitat types

Woodland, meadow.

Subsidiary habitats

Stream

Site description

A small site in the parish of Little Bealings, north of the residential area of Kesgrave. A stream and springs maintain wet meadow with a typical flora. Slightly less than half of the site, the northern portion, is wooded.

Protected species

Viviparous lizard *Lacerta vivipara*

Protected species potential

Grass snake *Natrix natrix*

BAP habitats present

Wet woodland, lowland meadow, lowland mixed deciduous wood.

BAP species seen

-

BAP species known

Toad *Bufo bufo*, viviparous lizard

BAP species potential

Water shrew *Neomys fodiens*, grass snake *Natrix natrix*

Connectivity

Good. Connectivity is curtailed by the A12 to the east but Kesgrave Wood CWS and Sinks Valley SSSI lie to the west. Woodland to the south gives way to development but there is open countryside to the north.

Structural diversity

Good. The site contains woodland, a stream and wet meadow grading in to dryer habitat as it slopes upward to the south.

Flora

The visit was conducted at the end of a dry period. Much of the floor of the woodland area was dry, only becoming damp near the stream. Tree species included ash *Fraxinus excelsior* and oak *Quercus robur* many with a covering of ivy *Hedera helix*. There was occasional hazel *Corylus avellana* and hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* in the dryer area. Alder *Alnus glutinosa* and willow *Salix* sp become the predominant species towards the margins of the wooded area where the ground is wetter. What ground layer there was in the drier areas was dominated by nettle *Urtica dioica* giving way to ground ivy *Glechoma hederacea*

and herb Robert *Geranium robertianum* then a carpet of opposite-leaved golden-saxifrage *Chrysosplenium oppositifolium* on the damper ground adjacent to the stream. The stream is bordered on the northern side by thick growth of pendulous sedge *Carex pendula* with occasional marsh thistle *Cirsium palustre*.

The meadow areas are south of the stream. These are fringed to west and north by alder and willow with some immature sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus*. To the south the land rises to woodland. This slope is experiencing bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* encroachment. The intermediate slope has more open areas with clumps of Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus* and creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens*. The lower areas of the meadow are wet and have typical wet flora. As well as thick stands of sedge clumps of hemp agrimony *Eupatorium cannabinum* and meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria* are in evidence. Other species noted included greater bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus pendunculatus*, figwort *Scrophularia* sp., angelica *Angelica sylvestris*, rushes *Juncus* sp and horsetail *Equisetum palustre*.

There are historic records of southern marsh-orchid *Dactylorhiza praetermissa* from the meadow and twayblade *Listera ovata* and wild strawberry *Fragaria vesca* from the wooded area. These species were not seen during this visit. The dry period will have adversely affected the woodland ground flora and the meadow was too overgrown to see orchid spikes.

Fungi

The wooded area has a number of fallen trees, some of which have developed bracket fungi such as *Chondrostereum purpureum* and *Coriolus versicolor*. Other fungi noted were inkcaps *Coprinus* sp and *Naucoria escharioides* which associated with alder.

Avifauna

The site has a limited number of mature trees and little under storey in the wooded area which will limit its attractiveness to many species. The wet meadows could provide excellent winter habitat for species such as snipe *Gallinago gallinago* if the vegetation is managed. Species noted during the visit were:

Robin <i>Erithacus rubecula</i>	Blue tit <i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>
Blackbird <i>Turdus merula</i>	Long tailed tit <i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>
Wren <i>Troglodytes troglodytes</i>	Jay <i>Garrulus glandarius</i>
Great tit <i>Parus major</i>	

Invertebrates

Deadwood will provide good habitat for this group and the meadows may support species of brown butterfly although there was limited grass. Depending on the quality of the stream this may also have a good invertebrate population.

Herpetofauna

Viviparous lizard have formerly been recorded in the woodland area and toads from the wider site. The wet meadows may also support grass snake.

Mammals

Rabbits *Oryctolagus cuniculus* are present as will be common small mammals such as field vole *Microtus agrestis*. The relatively undisturbed habitat and stream may provide suitable habitat for water shrew

Comments and recommendations

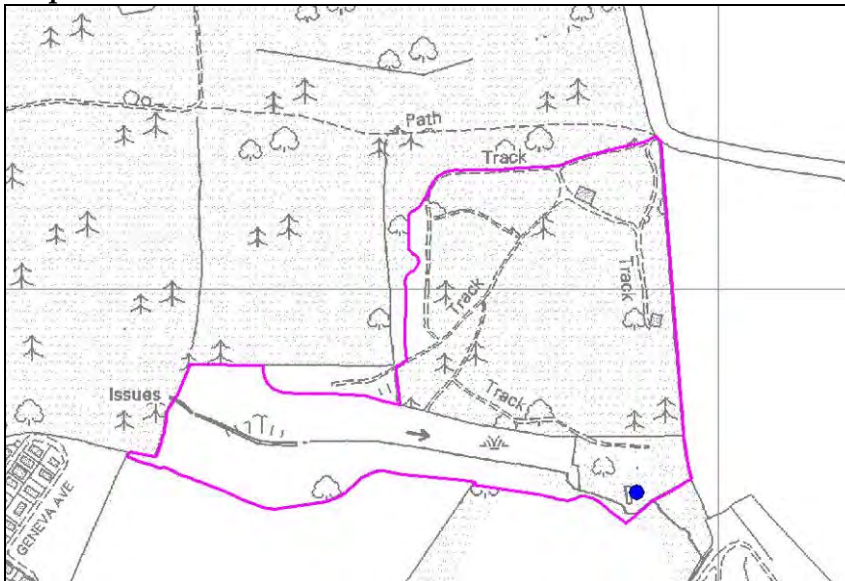
This site has been subject to sporadic management. Until 2000 the Greenways project was involved with cutting and raking the meadow. It is in an Environmental Stewardship agreement. At the time of the visit it was not apparent that any management was being carried out and this is resulting in the spread of more aggressive species. This will have a long term detrimental effect on the flora of the meadow but is not irreversible if management is reinstated in the near future. Cutting the meadow and removing the cut vegetation, possibly to habitat piles at the periphery of the site, would have an immediate beneficial effect.

One further visit early in 2010 to check on management status is recommended.

Old Rotary Camping Ground

Site status	County Wildlife Site
Grid reference	TM 2570 4596
Location	Martlesham, south east of Walk Farm.
Area	10.43 Hectares
Date	18 September 2009
Recorder	T Seagon
Weather conditions	Sunny, light breeze, 20°C
Ranking	2
Biodiversity value	High conservation value

Map



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Photographs



Wooded area



Heather regeneration in open areas under trees



Acid grassland



Bracken on meadow with willow in background



Anthills in meadow area next to ditch

Habitat types

Mixed woodland

Acid grassland

Wet meadow

Subsidiary habitats

Spring fed stream (mainly dry at time of visit)

Site description.

This site has a wide variety of habitats in a relatively small area. The northern area is well wooded with a number of clearings the larger of which contain the owners accommodation. The wood gives way in the south west to rabbit grazed acid grassland. A spring rises in the west of the sight and a watercourse runs across the southern portion. The ditch itself is bordered by willow scrub. South of this large areas of grassland are now dominated by bracken.

Protected species

-

Protected species potential

Reptiles. Bats. (Silver studded blue butterfly *Plebeius argus* – limited protection)

BAP habitats present

Lowland dry acid grassland

BAP species seen

Dunnock *Prunella modularis*

Grayling butterfly *Hipparchia semele*

BAP species known

Silver studded blue butterfly *Plebeius argus* (from 1986)

BAP species potential

Reptiles and possibly toads *Bufo bufo* subject to condition of source of spring. Bats. Silver studded blue butterfly.

Connectivity

Moderate – arable land to east and south and plantation to north and west limit the connectivity of this site. There are, however, several other County Wildlife Sites within one kilometre and whilst the surrounding habitat may not be ideal for wildlife it is not totally inhospitable.

Structural diversity

Excellent. As well as acid grassland and woodland with patches of heather there is an area of wet meadow in the south west corner of the site. Good scrub and understory in parts of the woodland give cover and foraging opportunities for birds and mammals.

Flora

A wide variety of habitats means this site has a diverse flora. Wetter areas have marsh thistle *Cirsium palustre* and march willowherb *Epilobium palustre*. A line of goat willow *Salix caprea* follows the water course which was merely damp at the time of the visit after a prolonged period without rain. This also had a fringe of reedmace *Typha latifolia* and rush *Juncus* sp. Marsh thistle occurs throughout the site, indicating that most areas can get wet and the owners advised that it can become extremely muddy.

South of the water course the meadow exhibits less acid flora with silverweed *Potentilla anserina*, ground ivy *Glechoma hederacea* and common sorrel *Rumex acetosa*. To the east however, Bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* has come to dominate the open ground.

The acid grassland is heavily rabbit grazed but does have a patch of bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg. scrub and occasional large hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* trees. Typical species such as sheep's sorrel *Rumex acetosella* and common centaury *Centaureum erythraea* are in evidence in the grassland areas.

The woodland is a mixture of oak *Quercus robur*, approximately one hundred boundary oak were also planted by the Rotary Club when the site was founded, silver birch *Betula pendula* and pine *Pinus* sp with sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus* and occasional holly *Ilex aquifolium* and turkey oak *Quercus cerris*. A shrub layer of gorse *Ulex europaeus* and bramble *Rubus fruticosus* is present with young bramble and bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* ground layer, particularly in the south of the site. The silver birch and pine have regenerated and the woodland area has thickened and extended somewhat over time. Where trees have fallen a good ground layer of heather *Calluna vulgaris* and bell heather *Erica cinerea* has developed. This was probably more extensive in the past and would have helped support the silver studded blue butterflies that were present at one time.

On the south west edge of the wood, there is a stand of sizeable hybrid poplar *Populus* sp. trees. The woodland also contains some substantial beech trees *Fagus Sylvatica*, presumably planted in.

Fungus

Earthball *Scleroderma citrinum*

Avifauna

The woodland has good structure which will benefit a variety of bird species. The open grassland and presence of ant hills will encourage green woodpecker *Picus viridis* and this species was present during the visit. Others noted included:

Duncock	Jay <i>Garrulus glandarius</i>
Blackbird <i>Turdus merula</i>	Long tailed tit <i>Aegithalos caudatus</i>
Blue tit <i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>	Pheasant <i>Phasianus colchicus</i>
Chaffinch <i>Fringilla coelebs</i>	Robin <i>Erithacus rubecula</i>
Crow <i>Corvus corone</i>	Sparrowhawk <i>Accipiter nisus</i>
Goldcrest <i>Regulus regulus</i>	Wood pigeon <i>Columba palumbus</i>
Great tit <i>Parus major</i>	

Invertebrates

Butterfly species noted were Grayling, large white *Pieris brassicae*, comma *Polygonia c-album*, speckled wood *Pararge aegeria* and small copper *Lycaena phlaeas*. 7-spot ladybird *Coccinella 7-punctata* and common darter dragonfly *Sympetrum striolatum* were also seen. A number of other groups including crane flies, ants and bees were present but not identified to species level. If silver studded blue were to return to the site it should be ascertained that the appropriate species of black ant (*Lasius niger* and *L. alienus* on heathland soils) that the butterfly needs to complete its lifecycle are present. There is a good population of grasshoppers in areas of longer vegetation.

Herpetofauna

The site has suitable habitat for all widespread reptiles. The lack of a pond, that shown on the map is apparently an old swimming pool, would make the site unsuitable for a permanent population of frogs *Rana temporaria* or toads. This in turn would restrict the presence of grass snake *Natrix natrix* which prefer to prey on amphibians.

Mammals

Rabbit *Oryctolagus cuniculus*, mole *Talpa europaea* and muntjac *Muntiacus reevesi* signs were noted. The site will also be used by foxes *Vulpes vulpes* and common small mammals. Some of the larger trees may provide suitable features for bats roosts.

Comments and recommendations

The current owners have put a large amount of effort in to clearing the scrap from this site. They are interested in restoring the heathland habitat which has suffered from woodland encroachment. Heather is readily regenerating in gaps where trees have fallen and further clearance would increase this. Habitat between this site and the nearest known silver-studded blue butterfly colony, however, is not conducive to movement therefore natural re-colonisation seems unlikely.

The meadow south of the watercourse would also benefit from some management to control bracken. The acid grassland in the south west is also suffering from encroachment by silver birch.

Bloomfield's Farm Meadow

Site status	County Wildlife Site
Grid reference	TM 2452 4685
Location	Martlesham
Area	3.84 Hectares
Date	31 July 2009
Recorder	T Seagon
Weather conditions	Sunny, hot, still
Ranking	2 subject to future management
Biodiversity value	High conservation value (but see ranking).

Map



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Photographs



Grassland at top of site showing bracken encroachment to right.



Heavy horsetail infestation in wetter area to north of site at base of slope



Looking north east across site from top of slope to pond, bracken in foreground.

Habitat types

Unimproved grassland. Spinney in wet flush. Pond

Subsidiary habitats

Bracken. Blackthorn scrub. Oak pollard.

Site description.

A large field north of Black Tiles Lane in Martlesham, the site is divided by a steep slope runs east west across. A spring emerges on this slope feeding a wet flush that runs to the northern boundary. This is choked with horsetail and also support a small spinney of *Salix* and There is a pond in the north east corner of the site and the vegetation indicates that the eastern side of the site, most of which is at the lower level, is also wet. The southern half of the site is dry with patches of neutral and acid grassland. Extensive areas of the site are covered in bracken much of which has bramble and other plants such as knapweed underneath it.

The pond was not accessible at the time of the visit but inspection through binoculars showed it to have at least 50 percent open water with a fringe of reedmace *Typha latifolia* .

Someone from the houses which abutt the south east boundary of the site has been cutting a strip of grass adjacent to the fences and dumping the clipping in the CWS.

Protected species

-

Protected species potential

Grass snake *Natrix natrix* , common lizard *Lacerta vivipara*, slow-worm *Anguis fragilis*

BAP habitats present

Lowland meadow, pond

BAP species seen

Common toad *Bufo bufo*

House sparrow *Passer domesticus* and starling *Sturnus vulgaris* were seen

BAP species known

-

BAP species potential

Grass snake, common lizard, slow-worm

There are historic records of grayling *Hipparchia semele* from this area.

Connectivity

Medium. The site is bounded by residential development to the south. The A12 runs one field away to the west creating a substantial barrier to terrestrial species although drains running under the road would provide a limited corridor. Gibraltar wood lies to the east but beyond that is also housing. The best connectivity is to the north where further fields, some of which also appear disused at the present time, run down to a water course which joins the river Fynn less than a kilometre to the east.

Structural diversity

Excellent. At the time of the visit the site supported long and short grass habitats, mature trees, thickly vegetated wet flushes and a pond. There were extensive stands of bracken much of it with bramble and other flora still underneath. If left unchecked the bracken will come to dominate the site even further.

Flora

This site provides a patchwork of habitat types, each with a distinct flora. At the moment large areas of the site are dominated by bracken *Pteridium aquilinum*. In some areas this has underlying bramble *Rubus fruticosus* and nettle *Urtica dioica* in others, species such as knapweed *Centaurea nigra* can be seen still growing under the bracken.

The south west of the site is the highest and driest area much of which is dominated by grasses such as false oat grass *Arrhenatherum elatius*, *Agrostis* sp with occasional Cock's foot *Dactylis glomerata* which became more frequent moving north. This area also has bracken and Gorse *Ulex europaeus* along the fence. There are small areas of acid grassland flora particularly toward the top of the slope with species such as hare's-foot clover *Trifolium arvense* and occasional sheep's sorrel *Rumex acetosella* and common stork's-bill *Erodium cicutarium* agg. in evidence.

Where the land falls away to the lower, wetter areas, much of the slopes away from the wet flush are covered in bracken. There was also a patch of blackthorn *Prunus spinosa* scrub, draped with white bryony *Bryonia dioica*, on eastern side of slope. A large stand of broom *Cytisus scoparius* was also present on the sloping land.

The slope adjacent to the wet flush had tall, coarse vegetation including creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense*, nettle *Urtica dioica*, hogweed *Heracleum sphondylium* and abundant horsetail *Equisetum arvense* forming a dense stand with cleavers growing over. Glaucous sedge *Carex flacca* occasional black sedge *Carex nigra* were visible next to the path in wetter areas with occasional clumps of tufted hair grass *Deschampsia cespitosa*. There were frequent patches of soft *Juncus effusus* and Hard *Juncus inflexus* rush. Scrub in this area was of rose *Rosa*. sp and elder *Sambucus nigra*. Although the pond was inaccessible large stands of meadowsweet were visible .

Although the survey was undertaken at a time when it might be expected to see the colonies of orchids noted in the site's designation, none were apparent. A warm wet spring has produced much lush growth and it is possible the spike were present but not visible.

Avifauna

The site offers a variety of feeding habitats for birds as it is so varied. Sparrow was seen in the bramble on the fence line to the south of the site and starling on the adjacent grassland. The trees in the wet flush offer nesting and feeding opportunities for a number of common species. The following were also seen during the visit:

Blue tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*
Great tit *Parus major*

Long tailed tit *Aegithalos caedatus*
Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

Blackbird *Turdus merula*
Magpie *Pica pica*
Kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*
Wood pigeon *Columba palumbus*

Green woodpecker *Picus viridis*
Greater spotted woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*
Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris*
Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Invertebrates

The variety of habitats present, including a pond, should support a range of invertebrates. As well as those species noted below a number of grasshopper were seen in the dry grass areas and flies and hover flies in the wetter areas with longer vegetation. There were a number of anthills towards the north of the site.

Lepidoptera

Common blue *Polyommatus icarus*
Essex skipper *Thymelicus lineola*
Small skipper *Thymelicus sylvestris*
Large white *Pieris brassicae*
Small white *Pieris rapae*

Red admiral *Vanessa atalanta*
Painted lady *Vanessa cardui*
Speckled wood *Pararge aegeria*
Gatekeeper *Pyronia tithonus*
Meadow brown *Maniola jurtina*

Odonata

Azure damselfly *Coenagrion puella*
Common darter *Sympetrum striolatum*

Hymenoptera

Carder bee *Bombus pascuorum*
Red tailed bumble bee *Bombus lapidarius*

Coleoptera

Banded Sexton Beetle *Nicrophorus investigator*

Herpetofauna

One juvenile common toad was seen during the visit. The mix of habitats habitat and presence of a pond makes this site suitable for other common amphibians such as common frog and smooth newt as well as reptiles such as grass snake and slow worm.

Mammals

Signs of fox *Vulpes vulpes* and rabbit *Oryctolagus cuniculus* were seen but common small mammals such as field vole *Microtus agrestis* are likely to occur on the site.

Comments and recommendations

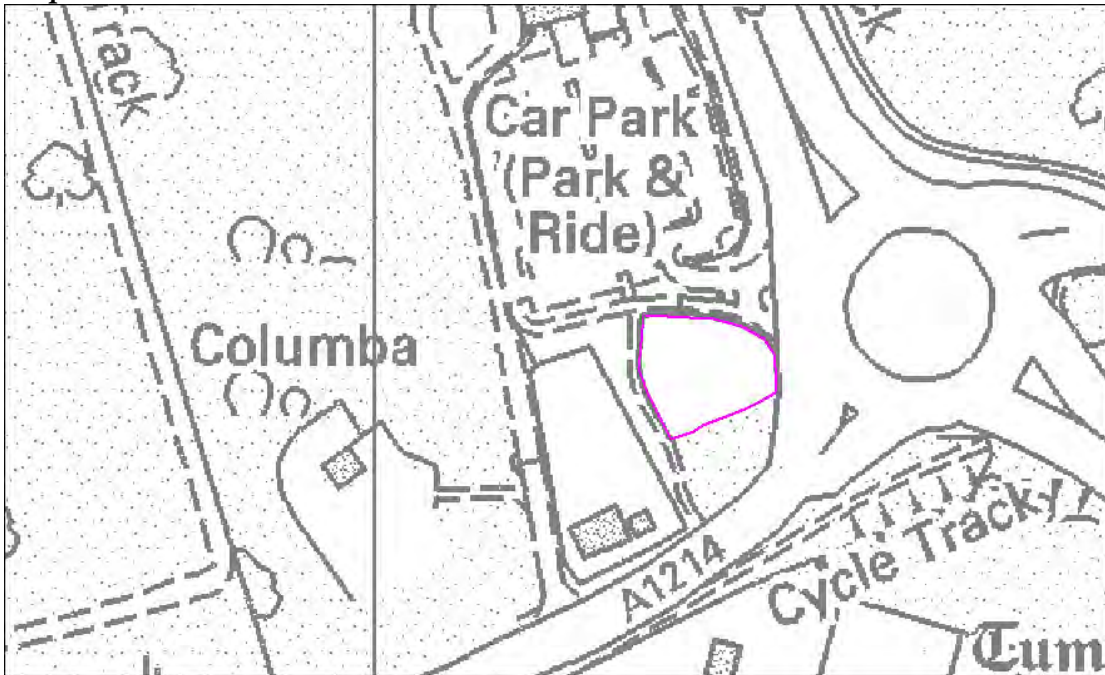
Management recommendations for this site was drawn up in 1999 and were followed for a number of years. Unfortunately the grazing regime has ceased and the site has not been subject to grazing for three to four years. The nature of the site, much of it being on a steep slope, would make mechanical management difficult. Bracken is, therefore, encroaching where soil conditions are suitable. Personal communication with the owner indicated that he no longer has the resources to manage the site but would be amenable to help from local conservation groups as has happened in the past with Otley College students helping to cut the vegetation in the wet flush.

Attempts to reach the pond were abandoned on health and safety grounds.

Martlesham Plantation Acid Grassland

Site status	County Wildlife Site
Grid reference	TM 2410 4626
Location	Martlesham
Area	0.12 Hectares
Date	31 July 2009
Recorder	T Seagon
Weather conditions	Sunny, hot, still
Ranking	2 as CWS but needs reviewing
Biodiversity value	Low

Map



Crown Copyright Licence Number 10016410

Photographs



Habitat types

Acid grassland

Subsidiary habitats

-

Site description.

Remnant area of Martlesham Common north of the A1214 and west of the A12. Now separated from the main body of the common by the above roads and much reduced by development.

Protected species

-

Protected species potential

-

BAP habitats present

Lowland Dry Acid Grassland

BAP species seen

-

BAP species known

-

BAP species potential

-

Connectivity

Low – there is woodland to the south and west of this site but there is no similar adjacent habitat. It is separated from Martlesham Common by a main road. The remainder of the site surveyed in 1999 is now a park and ride facility.

Structural diversity

None

Flora

Typical acid loving plants such as common Centaury *Centaureum erythraea*, buck's-horn plantain *Plantago coronopus* and mouse-ear hawkweed *Pilosella officinarum* are present but nettle *Urtica dioica* and creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense* are appearing adjacent to the wood. Other areas have coarser grasses and bramble *Rubus fruticosus* seedlings.

A ring of the toad stool *Marasmius oreades* was present in the grass sward. A single *Russula* sp was seen on the south boundary next to the trees.

Avifauna

None were seen during the visit. Surrounding trees will provide roosting and nesting opportunities and some species may forage on site but the small size will limit the value.

Invertebrates

None were seen during the visit. Flowering plants on site will provide a limited food resource for this group. The site appears too small to sustain populations of, for instance, ground beetles.

Herpetofauna

Due to its size the site is unsuitable.

Mammals

Mole *Talpa europaea*, rabbit *Oryctolagus cuniculus*.

Comments and recommendations

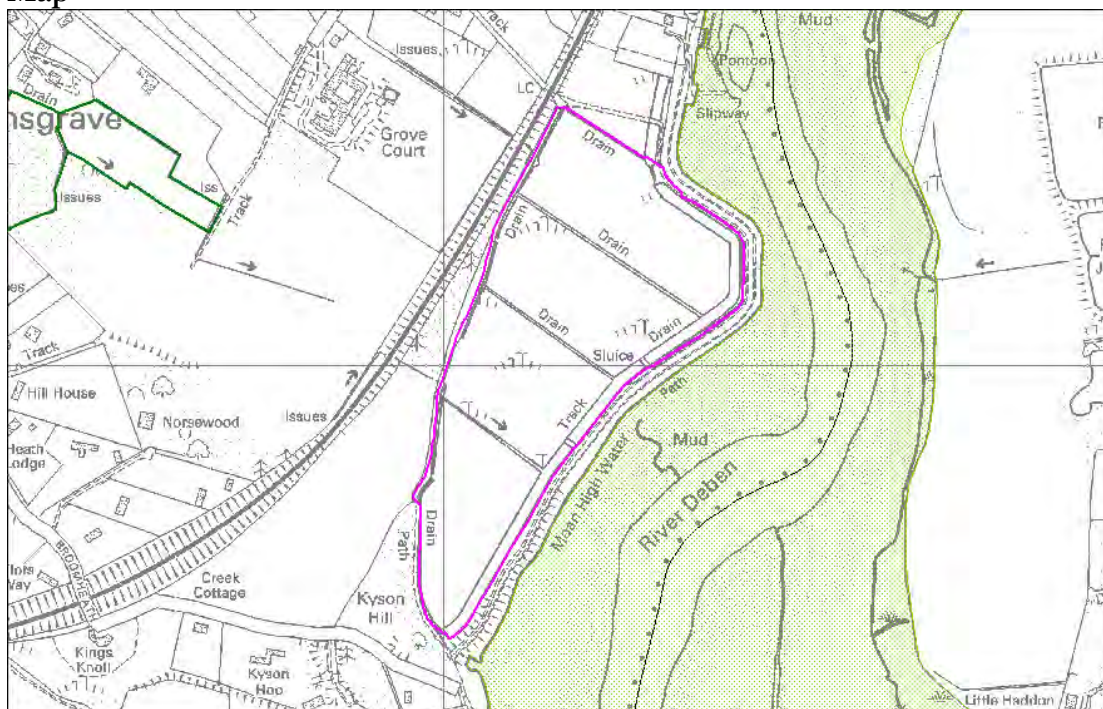
Moles are usually uncommon on acid grassland as their food, earthworms, cannot tolerate the acidity. The presence of a number of mole hills adjacent to the main road would indicate that this site may be experiencing nutrient enrichment from traffic exhaust.

This is now an extremely small remnant of what was already a remnant habitat. What remains is subject to eutrophication from the adjacent road. The classification of this site should be reviewed.

Kyson Meadows

Site status	County Wildlife Site
Grid reference	TM 2716 4799
Location	Woodbridge
Area	11.61 Hectares
Date	25 June 2009
Recorder	T Seagon
Weather conditions	Sunny, hot, breezy
Ranking	2
Biodiversity value	High conservation value

Map



Crown Copyright Licence Number 10016410

Photographs



Views across meadows from river wall looking south and north



Looking north across meadow from footpath on western boundary.

Habitat types

Unimproved pasture, drains with rush, reedbed

Subsidiary habitats

Pollarded trees

Site description.

Grazing meadow between the Deben river wall and railway line south of Woodbridge. The grassland is crossed by a number of drains from which water vole have been recorded in the past. The west of the site boasts some fine pollarded willows which provide excellent bird and invertebrate habitat.

Protected species

Water vole *Arvicola terrestris*

Protected species potential

-

BAP habitats present

Reedbed

BAP species seen

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

BAP species known

Water vole *Arvicola terrestris*, grey partridge *Perdix perdix*, toad *bufo bufo*

BAP species potential

Grass snake *Natrix natrix*

Connectivity

Good. Woodbridge lies to the north and north west and the land rises at Kyson Point to the south limiting the amount of similar habitat adjacent to the meadow. However the Deben Estuary Site of Special Scientific Interest to the east and a rail line, a good wildlife corridor, to the west provide connectivity.

Structural diversity

Medium – the majority of the site is grazing meadow but drains traverse them at several points. The large drain on the eastern border supports a band of reedbed. There are several mature willows along the western boundary and along the north west end of the ditches.

Flora

Due to the presence of grazing cattle a close inspection of the meadow flora was not made. Patches of celery leaved buttercup *Ranunculus sceleratus* were present in the muddy areas and there was occasional patches of marsh thistle *Cirsium palustre*. Other wet loving plants such as brookweed *Samolus valerandi*, hairy sedge *Carex hirta* and marsh marigold *Caltha palustris* have also been recorded here.

The drains within the site appeared to be heavily congested with rush *Juncus* sp. The western boundary ditch was completely covered with duck weed *Lemna* sp. The ditch along the river wall had a broad fringe of common reed *Phragmites australis*. The landward banks of the river wall support a collection of relatively common but valuable plants which should support a good lepidoptera community. Ox-eye daisy *Leucanthemum vulgare*, knapweed *Centaurea nigra*, bird's-foot trefoil *Lotus corniculatus*, Garlic Mustard *Alliaria petiolata*, St. John's Wort *Hypericum perforatum* and cowslip *Primula veris* were among the species noted.

Avifauna

The site is designated in part for its value as a winter feeding and roosting site for a variety of birds including snipe *Gallinago gallinago* and teal *Anas crecca*, an amber listed bird of conservation concern. The ditches and reedbed will also provide breeding habitat for common species such as sedge *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus* and reed *Acrocephalus scirpaceus* warbler and moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*. The BAP species reed bunting was seen during the visit.

Invertebrates

Conditions at the time of the visit were not ideal for observing invertebrates as the breeze was strong. Meadow Brown *Maniola jurtina* butterflies were observed on the banks of the river wall. The cattle grazed, unimproved meadow and mature trees will provide a good habitat for this group and further information should be sought on what is present.

Herpetofauna

The site has, in the past, supported a large population of breeding toads. Their current status here is not known. Some areas of the river wall and rough grass should be good habitat for widespread reptiles but there are no records from the immediate vicinity. Much of the vegetation was very dense at the time of the visit and amenity use of the wall may cause too much disturbance.

Mammals

There are records of water vole from the drains and common species such as fox *Vulpes vulpes* and field voles *Microtus agrestis*. Muntjac deer *Muntiacus reevesi* slot were noted in the soft earth at the margins of the site.

Comments and recommendations

The meadows biodiversity value is being maintained by cattle grazing although some of the drains appeared to be filled with vegetation rather than fringed by it. They would, however, be managed later in the year than this visit. The willows on the western margin appear to be undergoing progressive management to re-pollard them. At the time of the visit those toward the north of the site did not appear to have been touched for some time and were in need of cutting back.

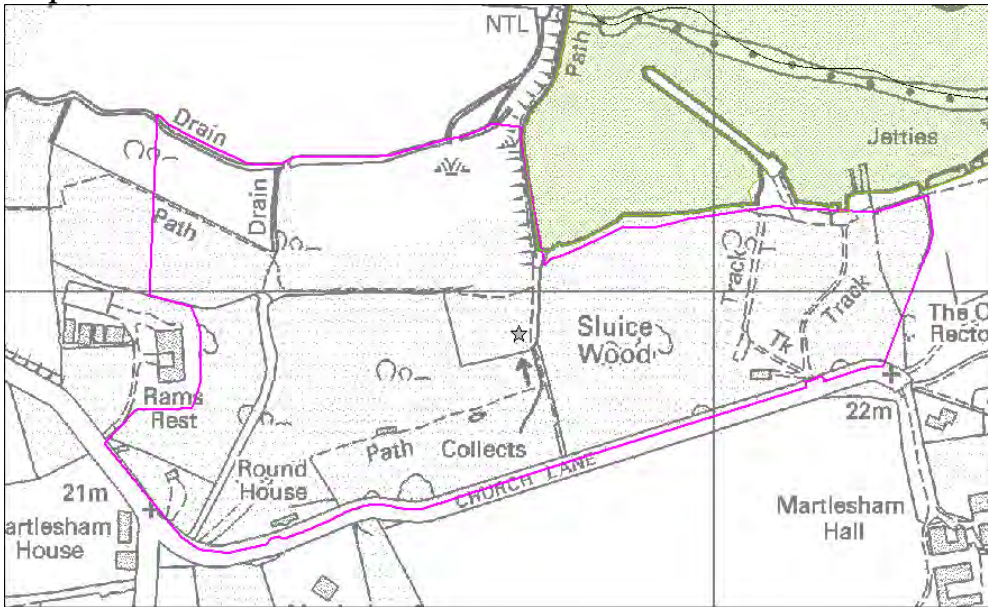
Should the opportunity arise surveys to investigate the invertebrate population of the site should be undertaken.

The site is partly designated for overwintering wildfowl. A further visit at the appropriate time of year would be needed to confirm their continued presence.

Sluice Wood

Site status	County Wildlife Site
Grid reference	TM 2585 4697
Location	Martlesham
Area	11.66 Hectares
Date	25 June 2009
Recorder	T Seagon
Weather conditions	Sunny, hot, breezy
Ranking	2
Biodiversity value	High conservation value

Map



Crown Copyright Licence Number 10016410

Photograph



View across south east of wood showing strong nettle growth.



Tyre tracks in north east of wood.



Mature oak on north west footpath



Open grass and scrub at north west corner

Habitat types

Mixed, deciduous woodland

Subsidiary habitats

Pond – not inspected

Site description.

Rising from Martlesham Creek and the Fynn river valley, Sluice Wood gives the impression of being a patchwork. Some areas have a sparse understory and a large number of tall, relatively young trees. In other areas there is better ground cover, more mature trees and a more established feel to the wood. Well worn paths cross the site and there is ample evidence of human use including at least two well established barbeque sites presumed to be associated with domestic residences along the southern fringe of the wood. There is evidence of felling and ground disturbance (large wheeled vehicle(s)) from the ruts and large nettle bed which now dominates an area in the north east.

Protected species

-

Protected species potential

Bats

BAP habitats present

Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland, Ponds

BAP species seen

-

BAP species known

This site is reported to support a large breeding population of common toad *Bufo bufo*

BAP species potential

Bats, hedgehog *Erinaceous europaeus*

Connectivity

Moderate. The Fynn River and Deben Estuary Site of Special Scientific Interest Terrestrial lie immediately to the north of the wood but terrestrial connectivity is restricted by Martlesham village and associated development to the west and north. There is farm land to the east and to the immediate south. There is further woodland to the south but much of this is plantation.

Structural diversity

Variable – good in some areas. As mentioned above the wood has distinct areas with very different floristic characteristics. In the less disturbed areas there are good ground, shrub and tree layers. There

was a distinct increase in bird activity in these areas. A spring runs down the central path providing damp habitat and the map shows a pond on site although this was not seen during this visit.

Flora

In the north east of the wood trees comprise occasional wild cherry *Prunus avium*, frequent hazel *Corylus avellana* including an area of neglected coppice, alder *Alnus glutinosa*, frequent sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus* and some ash *Fraxinus excelsior* both of which are setting saplings. There is also occasional oak and *Quercus robur*, holly *Ilex aquifolium*. The understory along the paths is relatively sparse with dog's mercury *Mercurialis perennis* and wood avens *Geum urbanum*. Some bramble *Rubus fruticosus* agg. is establishing but that too is sparse. Moving south in to the site there is evidence of disturbance and an extensive nettle *Urtica dioica* bed has developed. In this area the regeneration is all sycamore.

Moving west occasional hornbeam *Carpinus betulus* and sweet chestnut *Castanea sativa* appear and the canopy thickens. The ground flora become more diverse containing enchanter's nightshade *Circaea lutetiana*, violet *viola* sp., Cuckoo-pint *Arum maculatum*, wood false-brome *Brachypodium sylvaticum* and occasional ferns.

Towards the central footpath to Church Lane the canopy thickens and nettle give way to dog's mercury once more. The Church Lane boundary has a thick hedge with lime *Tilia x europaea*, elm *Ulmus procera* oak, hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* and bramble. Once away from the central path the western half of the wood appears less disturbed although the footpaths are still well used. This area has more mature oaks with occasional silver birch and some bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* in the understory. The ditch, dry at the time of the visit, to the west of the site is marked by a line of large oak pollards. The visit was too late in the year for early purple orchid *Orchis mascula* known from this site to be visible.

The extreme north west corner of the site has a small meadow with scrub to the south of the footpath and a wet area of predominately willow *Salix* sp. to the north. These area will provide excellent cover and feeding for a variety of birds including warblers.

Avifauna

Lack of understory in some areas of the wood will make it less attractive to many bird species. There are, however, sufficient areas of good habitat with old trees with suitable nesting opportunities to support a number of common species. Wood pigeon *Columba palumbus*, wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*, chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs* and great *Parus major*, blue *Cyanistes caeruleus* and long tailed *Aegithalos caudatus* tit were seen. The west of the site supported a large number of blackbird *Turdus merula* and chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita* was heard in the willow bed to the north west.

Invertebrates

No invertebrates were noted during the visit but the old trees, dead wood and mix of dry and wet habitats should support a diverse population.

Herpetofauna

Previous reports comment that the site is important for breeding toads.

Mammals

There are records of badger *Meles meles* from the vicinity although no signs were found during this visit and large areas of the wood given the impression of being quite disturbed which might deter this species.

Common species such as fox *Vulpes vulpes* and wood mouse *Apodemus sylvaticus* are very likely to be present as are the BAP species hedgehog. There was no obvious browse line in areas with a shrub layer which would indicate that muntjac deer *Muntiacus reevesi* are not frequent visitors. Again, disturbance may deter deer.

The large oak pollards on the western boundary offer suitable roosting habitat for bats.

Comments and recommendations

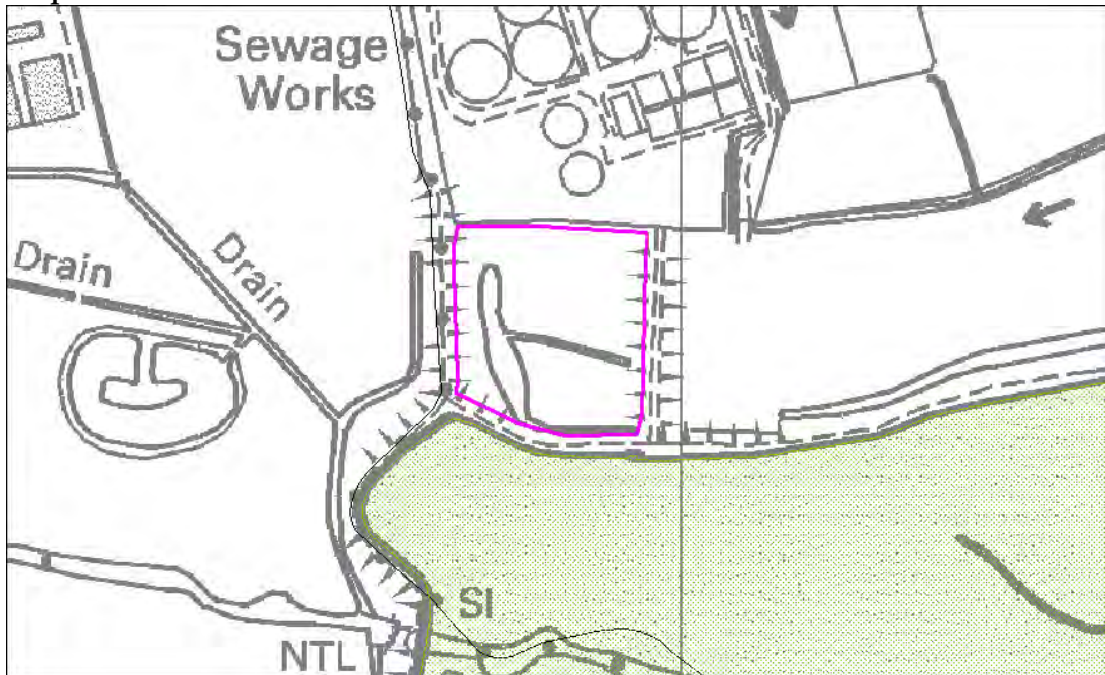
In addition to the well use footpaths this wood, particularly to the east, shows signs of heavy human usage as may be expected from a private site. Some felling is taking place and there is regeneration in the gaps, although this appears to be mainly sycamore. Where the canopy has been opened and the ground disturbed nettle has come to dominate but this should recede as the woodland settles again. On the whole such sites do well with little or no management. Some selective removal of sycamore may be desirable to ensure this species does not come to dominate more of the wood.

A visit in May would be required to confirm the status of early purple orchid *Orchis mascula* and other spring flora.

Martlesham Creek

Site status	County Wildlife Site
Grid reference	TM 2594 4734
Location	Martlesham
Area	0.66 Hectares
Date	25 June 2009
Recorder	T Seagon
Weather conditions	Sunny, hot, breezy
Ranking	2
Biodiversity value	High as part of the wider area

Map



Crown Copyright Licence Number 10016410

Photograph



Looking north east from footpath



Looking east – false oat grass visible in foreground where reed bed is drying out

Habitat types

Reedbed

Subsidiary habitats

Open water, rough herbs/scrub

Site description.

A small area of reedbed, the western portion of which is drying out and open water north of the sea wall along the Deben Estuary Site of Species Scientific Interest.

Protected species

-

Protected species potential

Otter *Lutra lutra*, water vole *Arvicola terrestris*, harvest mouse *Micromys minutus*, viviparous lizard *Lacerta vivipara*, grass snake *Natrix natrix*

BAP habitats present

Reedbed

BAP species seen

Reed Bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus* was seen in the vicinity and the CWS contains suitable habitat for this species.

BAP species known

-

BAP species potential

Otter, water vole, toad *Bufo bufo*, and viviparous lizard have all been recorded nearby and the site does contain suitable habitat for these species.

Connectivity

Good to the south and east. The site is immediately adjacent to the SSSI with further reedbed to the east.

Structural diversity

Moderate. The site is dominated by reed *Phragmites australis* but some areas have dried out and developed other vegetation and the banks have scrub cover. There is a small area of open water.

Flora

The site is dominated by common reed. The drier areas now sport willow herb *Epilobium* sp and creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense* with common grasses such as false oat grass *Arrhenatherum elatius*. The banks have developed gorse *Ulex europaeus*, oak *Quercus* sp. and blackthorn *Prunus spinosa* scrub and there is thick blackthorn scrub along the footpath to the west.

Avifauna

This site forms part of a complex of habitats that provide foraging and roosting sites for a number of different species. Whilst not specifically associated with the CWS sand martin *Riparia riparia* were seen feeding over the reedbeds. Calling sedge warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus* were noted and reed bunting were seen feeding young at the sluice to the west of the site. Reedbed are important overwintering habitat for species such as wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*.

Invertebrates

Although none were noted on the CWS at the time of the visit open water in other reedbeds to the east of this site, which supported aquatic vegetation, had good populations of odonata including emperor dragonfly *Anax imperator* and common blue damselfly *Enallagma cyathigerum*

Herpetofauna

The banks of the sea wall are potential reptile habitat and viviparous lizard has been recorded nearby. Grass snake may also use the ditches and drains.

Mammals

Otter and water vole have been recorded locally and there is no reason why they should not use this site. A path was visible across the site from the footpath to the ditch. This could have been made by fox *Vulpes vulpes* or deer. It is likely that small mammals will utilise the site and harvest mouse are known to build nests in reed bed. There is an old record of this species from the reedbeds to the west of the site.

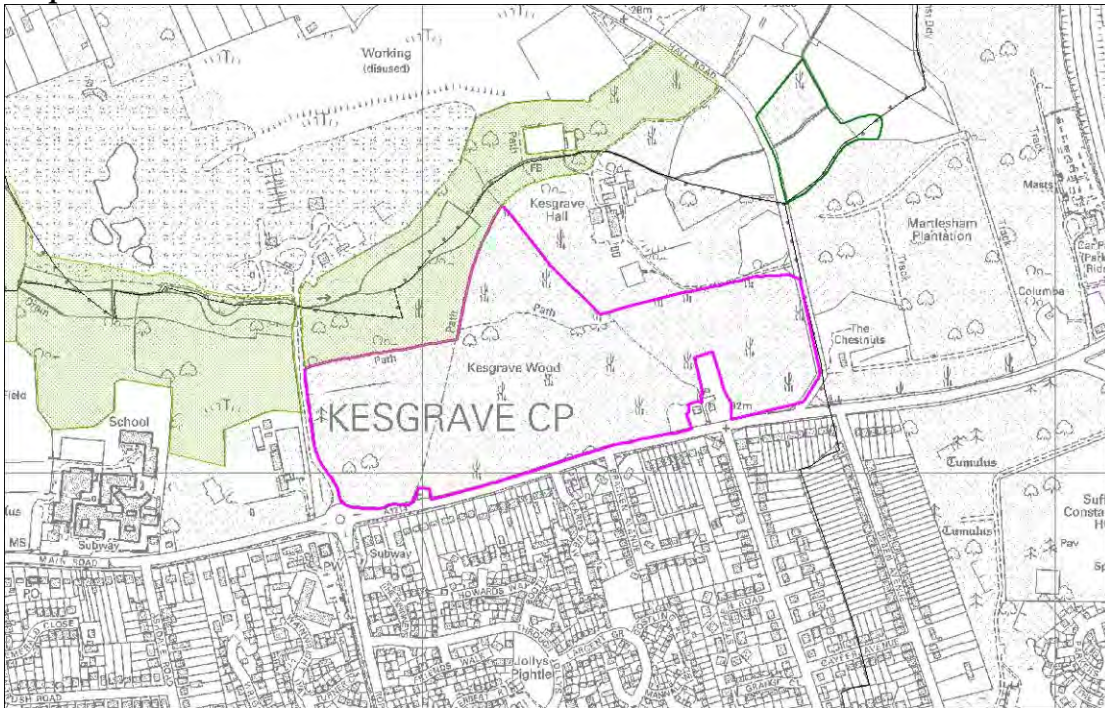
Comments and recommendations

There were no obvious signs of past management visible at the time of the visit and the site does appear to be drying out. It is valuable as part of the wider environment and whilst it contains good habitat, the small size of the designated area probably restricts the species it will support.

Kesgrave Wood

Site status	County Wildlife Site
Grid reference	TM 2322 4618
Location	Kesgrave, north of the A1214
Area	19.32 Hectares
Date	18 September 2009
Recorder	T Seagon
Weather conditions	Sunny, breezy, 20°C
Ranking	2
Biodiversity value	High conservation value

Map



Crown Copyright Licence Number 10016410

Photographs



East of wood showing limited understory



Storm blown timber in south west of site

Habitat types

Broadleaved woodland

Subsidiary habitats

-

Site description.

A long established plantation which has had varying degrees of management throughout its history. Many species are now self seeding and the wood has a good mixture of age classes. The wood has suffered extensive storm damage no all of which has been cleared but this provides a good stock of deadwood, often a rare commodity prone to being “tidied up”. Gates have been put in to the A1214 boundary and there are way marked paths across the site.

Protected species

-

Protected species potential

Bats

BAP habitats present

Lowland mixed deciduous woodland

BAP species seen

-

BAP species known

At one time this wood supported lesser spotted woodpecker *Dendrocopos minor*. This species has retreated from this area of Suffolk and although suitable habitat remains it seems unlikely it will recolonise.

BAP species potential

Hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus*

Connectivity

Good. Although there is solid residential development south of the A1214, which runs along the entire southern boundary of the wood, there is good connectivity on the remaining three sides of the wood. There is some limited connectivity south via open land around Suffolk Constabulary Headquarters to the Ipswich Heaths SSSI in the south of Kesgrave. The Sinks Valley SSSI runs along the north and north west boundaries of the site.

Structural diversity

Low to moderate. Much of the site has little understory restricting its diversity. There is a good mix of tree species and several mature specimens remain despite losses to storm damage. Lifted root plates will also provide micro-habitats.

Flora

There are a variety of trees including sweet chestnut *Castanea sativa*, oak *Quercus robur*, sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus*, beech *Fagus sylvaticus*, silver birch *Betula pendula*, hazel *Corylus avellana* and common lime *Tilia × europaea*. Many of the trees have been coppiced and some of the oaks pollarded. One enclosed area in the north of the site contains a number of young conifers.

In the east the understory is sparse with occasional nettle *Urtica dioica*. Moving west more of an understory develops with some bramble *Rubus fruticosus* and bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* which becomes thick in places. There is little shrub layer in evidence other than some rhododendron *Rhododendron ponticum*. And that provided by sapling sycamore.

The weather before the visit had been dry and less than ideal for fungi but some bracket species were noted:

Sulphur polypore *Laetiporus sulphureus*

Giant polypore *Meripilus giganteus*

King Alfred's cakes *Daldinia concentrica*

Mature trees and amounts of dead and fallen wood should mean this site has a good range of fungi.

Avifauna

The lack of understory in part of the wood restricts the use by birds but the following species were noted:

Wood pigeon *Columba palumbus*

Blue tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

Great tit *Parus major*

Goldcrest *Regulus regulus*

Great spotted woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*

Green woodpecker *Picus viridis*

Invertebrates

The amount of dead wood will make this an excellent site for saproxylic invertebrates. The variety and age of the trees will also provide a good habitat for this group. At the time of the visit speckled wood butterflies *Pararge aegeria* were seen. A number of different spiders were also noted.

Herpetofauna

The habitat was not though suitable for this group

Mammals

Some of the mature trees offer good roosting opportunities for bats.

Signs of rabbit *Oryctolagus cuniculus* were noted. There are previous reports of fallow *Dama dama*, roe *Capreolus capreolus* and Muntjac *Muntiacus reevesi* deer from the wood. Browsed off saplings of sycamore indicate that some are still present. Hedgehog may be present in areas with ground cover and in the hedgerows. Other small mammals such as wood mice *Apodemus sylvaticus* will present and predators such as fox *Vulpes vulpes* and weasel *Mustela nivalis* will use the site.

Comments and recommendations

Some work appears to be being carried out along the southern boundary. Elsewhere coppice stools have become overgrown and may be in danger of splitting at some future date. As long as this is not a health and safety issue this should not be a problem. The encouragement of understory in the east of the site would improve the site for avifauna. Otherwise, other than ensuring more vigorous species such as sycamore do not take over, this site should require little intervention.

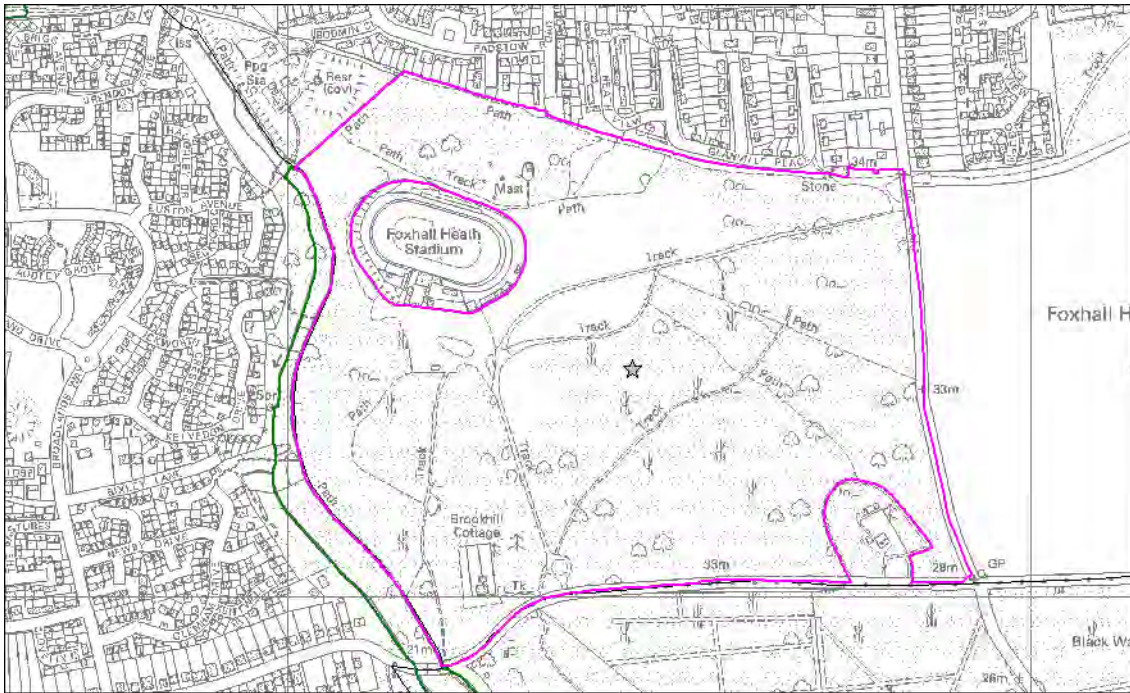
The south and west perimeters suffer from litter. To the west dumping of domestic waste is occurring despite a small bund at the road side.

Sinks Valley was incorporated in to the Sinks Valley Site of Special Scientific Interest in 1996.

Foxhall Stadium Wood

Site status	County Wildlife Site
Grid reference	TM 2146 4431
Location	Kesgrave
Area	46.06 Hectares
Date	10 July 2009
Recorder	T Seagon, P Hemphill
Weather conditions	Sunny, still, 18°C
Ranking	2
Biodiversity value	High conservation value

Map



Crown Copyright Licence Number 10016410

Photographs



Open area of rabbit grazed acid grassland



Young bracken at edge of central grassland.

Habitat types

Mixed, predominately broadleaved, woodland, acid grass

Subsidiary habitats

Amenity grass car park

Site description

A large site in to the east of Ipswich comprised predominately of broad leaved woodland with some open areas of acid grassland. The centre of the site has a large open area of grass, used as a car park for the Foxhall speedway stadium. The site is well used by the public with popular routes across the site well trodden. Other paths, however, have become overgrown through lack of use.

Protected species

Common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*

Great crested newt *Triturus cristatus*

Protected species potential

Other bat species, reptiles

BAP habitats present

Acid grassland

Lowland Mixed Deciduous Woodland

BAP species seen

Dunnock *Prunella modularis*

BAP species known

Great crested newt *Triturus cristatus*

Hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus*

Wood lark *Lullula arborea*

BAP species potential

Bats species, reptiles

Connectivity

Good – The Mount CWS, which in turn contains the Mill River CWS, runs down the western boundary of Foxhall Stadium Wood. This provides a connection to Ipswich Golf Course CWS which in turn abutts Ipswich Heaths Site of Special Scientific Interest. It is also less than 500 metres from Rushmere Heath CWS to the west. There is open arable land to the east which contains small pocket of semi-natural habitat such as woodland which will act as stepping stones. Although the south of the site is bordered by a busy road Brookhill Wood continues to the south of this and in turn forms part of the southerly areas of The Mount CWS.

Structural diversity

Good. The woodland on site has a variety of structure with some areas very open with little understorey and others quite dense. There is good edge habitat where trees give way to grass with some scrub.

Flora

Wooded areas contain a variety of trees with oak and birch both of which are regenerating and a dense canopy. There are some notably mature birch trees present. The shrub layer is bramble and gorse *Ulex europaeus* and ground layer nettle and bracken. The northern boundary, which abuts housing is suffering from some garden escapes/encroachment. Other tree species in this area are sycamore and ash, with seedlings of both in evidence, rowan and the occasional elder. Good ivy cover is present on some trees and there are quantities of honeysuckle in places.

Open, grassy areas are well grazed by rabbit and exhibit typical acid plant communities with sheep's sorrel, sheep's fescue, mouse-ear hawkweed and buck's-horn plantain. More generalist species such as knapweed, ragwort, ribwort plantain and yarrow are present woodland/grass interface. In one area the taller grass at the edge of the trees had been cut and the arisings left in place. This will cause enrichment of the sward in time and there was already evidence of creeping thistle coming in.

Avifauna

The woodland offers good habitat for a number of common species of bird and the following were noted during the visit:

Dunnock

Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus collybita*

Blackbird *Turdus merula*

Great tit *Parus major*

Blue tit *Cyanistes caeruleus*

Long tailed-tit *Aegithalos caudatus*

Magpie *Pica pica*

Jay *Garrulus glandarius*

Greenfinch *Carduelis chloris*

Chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*

Wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Green *Picus viridis* and great spotted woodpecker *Dendrocopos major* could also be expected.

Invertebrates

There is a good amount of dead wood present which will benefit invertebrate numbers as will the climbers and scrub such as honeysuckle, ivy and bramble. The large oaks may support purple hairstreak butterflies *Neozephyrus quercus*. The following species of butterfly were seen during the visit:

Large white *Pieris brassicae*

Meadow brown *Maniola jurtina*

Ringlet *Aphantopus hyperantus*

Speckled wood *Pararge aegeria*

Herpetofauna

There is suitable habitat on site for adder *Vipera berus* and common lizard *Lacerta vivipara*. The lack of water renders the much of the site unsuitable for amphibians although some may use the woodland adjacent to the Mill River to hibernate. There is a great crested newt record from the wood but this dates from 1984.

Mammals

Signs of fox *Vulpes vulpes* and rabbit *Oryctolagus cuniculus* were noted during the visit. Other common species will be present. The water vole record is probably associated with the Mill River in the Mount CWS. The woods may support deer species, especially muntjac *Muntiacus reevesi* but the high level of usage may deter this disturbance sensitive group.

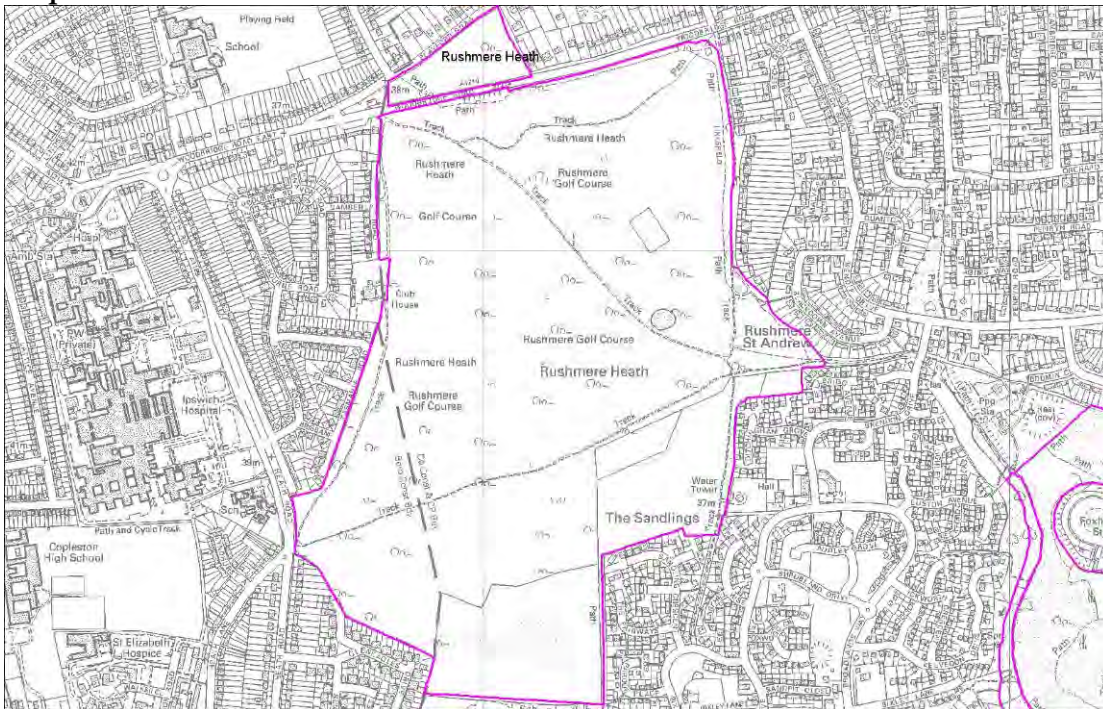
Comments and recommendations

The bracken is being managed to prevent it encroaching on the grassland. Some areas of gorse would benefit from some management such as coppicing. Some trees near stadium appear to have had fairly rudimentary work done to them and the wood discarded where it has fallen. Better use could be made of this by creating habitat piles.

Rushmere Heath

Site status	County Wildlife Site
Grid reference	TM 2014 4477
Location	Rushmere St Andrew
Area	79.7 Hectares
Date	18 September 2009
Recorder	T Seagon
Weather conditions	Sunny light breeze, 20°C
Ranking	2
Biodiversity value	High conservation value

Map



Crown Copyright Licence Number 10016410

Photographs



Open habitat and heather in north east.



Silver birch seedlings



Heather with gorse scrub

Habitat types

Heathland, acid grassland, broadleaved woodland

Subsidiary habitats

Golf course

Pond

Site description

Remnant of the Sandlings heath in Rushmere St Andrews to the east of Ipswich, now encapsulated by development. A golf course has been built on this site which also retains patches of woodland and heather heath. The site is subject to high amenity use as well as use by golfers.

Protected species

Grass snake *Natrix natrix*, slow-worm *Anguis fragilis*, viviparous lizard *Lacerta vivipara*

Protected species potential

There are some mature trees in the eastern woodland which might provide bat roosts.

BAP habitats present

Lowland dry acid grassland,

Lowland heath

Lowland mixed deciduous woodland

Ponds

BAP species seen

-

BAP species known

Hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus*

Grass snake, slow-worm, viviparous lizard

Grayling *Hipparchia semele*, silver-studded blue *Plebejus argus*, white letter hairstreak *Satyrium w-album*, lunar yellow underwing *Noctua orbona*

Linnet *Carduelis cannabina*, spotted flycatcher *Muscicapa striata*

BAP species potential

Bats, see above. Toad *Bufo bufo*.

Connectivity

Low. Foxhall Stadium Wood is immediately to the east of this site but they are linked only by a thin corridor which is bisected by a road.

Structural diversity

Good. The site, particularly to the east, contains pockets of woodland. Open golf course has stands of heather and Gorse *Ulex europaeus*

Flora

The wooded area to the east of the site has some veteran oak *Quercus robur* with holly *Ilex aquifolium*, hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* and the occasional Hazel *Corylus avellana*. Elm *Ulmus procera* is present in the boundary vegetation and will provide the habitat for the white-letter hairstreak butterflies. Ivy *Hedera helix* forms a ground layer with occasional ground ivy *Glechoma hederacea*. There is some blackthorn *Prunus spinosa* and silver birch *Betula pendula*. Open areas of grass are dominated by false oat grass *Arrhenatherum elatius*. Moving in to the site this gives way to finer, heathland grasses, gorse *Ulex europaeus*, ling *Calluna vulgaris* and bell heather *Erica cinerea* with occasional broom *Cytisus scoparius*. Both heathers and gorse are present in several age classes.

Some margin areas are scrubbing up with oak seedlings in evidence and in one area a large expanse of seedling silver birch. The site is heavily used by dog walkers and there are some signs of enrichment at path edges with coarser grasses and plants such as dock *Rumex* sp and mugwort *Artemisia vulgaris* moving in. One large patch of rosebay willowherb *Chamerion angustifolium* was noted in one of the rougher areas.

Avifauna

The timing of this visit, mid afternoon, was not ideal for observing birds. The woodland will support a range of common species such as great *Parus major*, blue tit *Cyanistes caeruleus* and chaffinch *Fringilla coelebs*. Green woodpecker *Picus viridis* may utilise the open grassland as may other ground foraging birds. Gorse and bramble scrub provide good nesting habitat for the BAP species linnet.

Invertebrates

Records of three BAP species of butterfly, grayling, silver-studded blue and white letter hairstreak and one BAP moth, lunar yellow underwing, are known from the site. The presence of garlic mustard *Alliaria petiolata* in the woodland means that orange tip butterflies are probably present earlier in the year *Anthocharis cardamines* and speckled wood *Pararge aegeria* are likely to use the woodland areas as well. The pond will support odonata and common darter *Sympetrum striolatum* and an unidentified hawkler were seen during this visit. The variety of habitats should ensure a varied invertebrate population.

Herpetofauna

The common reptiles species are all known from the site which provides good lizard habitat although possibly somewhat limited for slow-worm and grass snake. The pond may support amphibians but there are no records from the site and the terrestrial habitat is not ideal.

Mammals

Rabbits *Oryctolagus cuniculus* graze the grass and foxes *Vulpes vulpes* are likely to be present as will other common small mammals.

Comments and recommendations

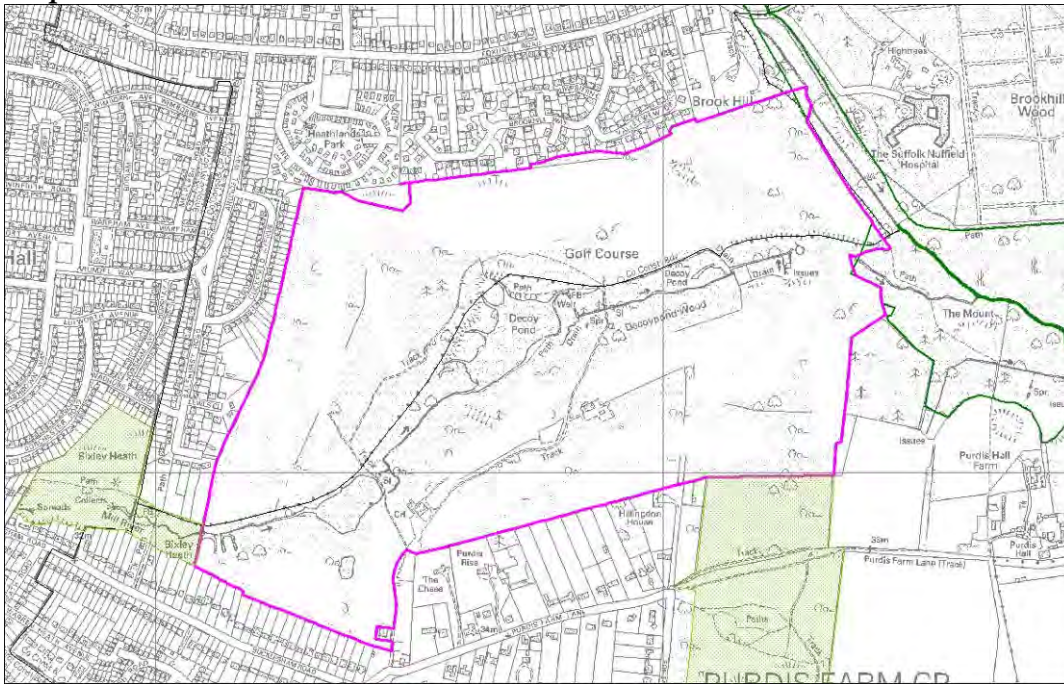
Management of the gorse was in evidence on parts of the golf course. In other areas it has become over mature, tall and leggy. This has made it susceptible to fire and burnt patches were in evidence, particularly to the west of the site. A detailed management plan has been formulated for this site.

Householders on the west edge have been depositing garden waste on to the CWS.

Ipswich Golf Course

Site status	County Wildlife Site
Grid reference	TM 2076 4321
Location	Purdis Farm
Area	88.17 Hectares
Date	21 September 2009
Recorder	T Seagon
Weather conditions	Overcast, light breeze, 13°C
Ranking	2
Biodiversity value	High conservation value

Map



Crown Copyright Licence Number 10016410

Photographs



Young heather showing patches (brown) of heather beetle damage



Gorse management



Wet meadow at edge of water course



Decoy pond

Habitat types

Heathland, decoy ponds, woodland, wet woodland, wet meadow, reedbed.

Subsidiary habitats

Golf course

Site description.

Two golf courses, an eighteen and a nine hole, built on heathland above the Mill River valley in the east of Ipswich. The valley itself contains a number of ponds including two large decoy ponds which have been in use since the 1600s. latterly as fishing lakes.

Protected species

Bats and reptiles – see attached list

Protected species potential

-

BAP habitats present

Lowland heath, lowland mixed deciduous woodland, wet woodland, reedbed.

BAP species seen

-

BAP species known

See attached list.

BAP species potential

The site already supports a wide variety of BAP species. Whilst one or two, such as the marsh tit *Parus palustris*, have not been recorded recently the habitat still exists for them. Other species such as white-mantled wainscot moth *Archanara neurica* have moved in as suitable habitat, in this case dry reedbed, has become available.

Connectivity

Ipswich Golf Course is encapsulated on three sides by development with only the eastern border abutting semi-natural habitat. Bixley heath SSSI does adjoin the south west corner but the SSSI is itself under pressure from surrounding development. Some of the houses along the southern boundary have large gardens which help buffer the site but some of these are subject to “back land” development speculation.

Structural diversity

Excellent. The predominant habitat is the heather heath of the golf course. The heather and gorse are managed to give a variety of height and age classes, increasing the diversity. The sloping land and valley

provides woodland, wet woodland, coppice, reed bed, wet and dry meadow areas and water courses and ponds with fringing sedge and other wetland vegetation.

Flora

The wide variety of habitats present means there is an extensive list of flora with approximately three hundred species of vascular plant and ninety fungi recorded.

Heather beetle *Lochmaea suturalis* is causing problems across large areas of the course. This beetle seems to have a particularly disastrous effect on mature heather and large blocks have been killed. The problem is exacerbated by the areas where the heather has died being colonised by grasses, particularly wavy hair grass *Deschampsia flexuosa*. This may be aggravated by possible eutrophication from surrounding development.

Avifauna

Over 100 species have been recorded on site with nearly fifty resident all year or as seasonal migrants. Please see attached list for BAP species.

Invertebrates

The variety of habitats supports over forty BAP species of moth and a large number of other invertebrates.

Silver studded blue butterfly have not been recorded on the site for three to four years and the Golf Club's Conservation Officer believes this may be due to declining populations on the adjacent SSSIs

Herpetofauna

Three species of reptile, grass snake *Natrix natrix*, viviparous lizard *Lacerta vivipara* and slow-worm *Anguis fragilis*, have been recorded on site. Permanent reptile tins are positioned around the site so an informal check can be kept on the populations. Whilst there is no statistical support for the theory at the moment, the Conservation Officer is of the opinion that domestic cats from the adjacent housing development to the north of the golf course have caused a distinct decline in both viviparous lizard and slow-worm. Dead individuals showing damage commensurate with attack by cats have been found.

Mammals

A wide variety of common mammals use the site including occasional roe deer *Capreolus capreolus*. Five species of bat have been recorded at the site. At one time noctule *Nyctalus noctula* roost was the largest in Suffolk but it has recently dispersed as a result of the tree becoming occupied by wild bees. There are five other known BAP mammals on site. The water course and lakes provide habitat for water vole *Arvicola terrestris*, water shrew *Neomys fodiens* and visiting otter *Lutra lutra*. Harvest mice *Micromys minutus* are also known to be present. One individual was seen on the heather of the open course but they are usually noted from nests in the reedbed. The woodland offers cover for hedgehog *Erinaceus europaeus*.

Comments and recommendations

Ipswich Golf Club have been far sighted in recognising the ecological value of their site and taking steps to conserve it. The primary responsibility of two members of the ground staff is nature conservation and there is a flexible approach with regard to other staff helping with large and seasonal tasks. A comprehensive programme of biological recording means the management, which is undertaken on a flexible, rolling five year plan, is well informed and can be targeted where necessary. As a result the site supports an impressive species list with a substantial number of protected and BAP species.

A programme of heathland restoration is underway to return the course to somewhere near its original, intended design. This is facing difficulties through heather beetle infestation. There are limited options available to the Club to control this pest as the common ones, burning and pesticides are not combatable with the surroundings or policy of nature conservation. The loss of heather has been

accompanied by encroachment of grass species, a problem encountered elsewhere in the UK when heather is killed off and the stripping of affected areas and reseeded may be necessary.

Surrounding urbanisation has brought problems with possible eutrophication of the site and predation of the wildlife by domestic cats. The predation is, at the moment, concentrated on the northern boundary where high density housing with small gardens comes right to the edge of the course. Should the large gardens to the south of the site be subject to back land development this would intensify the problem and could have disastrous implications for the reptile population. Deterioration of the adjacent SSSIs appears to be reducing source populations of species such as the silver studded blue butterfly.

Thank you to Neil Sherman, Conservation Officer, for his time and for the species lists.

BAP species known – P = also protected**Mammals**

Harvest Mouse	<i>Micromys minutus</i>	
Hedgehog	<i>Erinaceus europaeus</i>	
Otter	<i>Lutra lutra</i>	P
Water shrew	<i>Neomys fodiens</i>	
Water vole	<i>Arvicola terrestris</i>	P

Bats

Common pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus pipistrellus</i>	P
Soprano pipistrelle	<i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>	P
Brown Long-Eared	<i>Plecotus auritus</i>	P
Noctule	<i>Nyctalus noctula</i>	P
Daubenton's	<i>Myotis daubentoni</i>	P

Invertebrates**Moths**

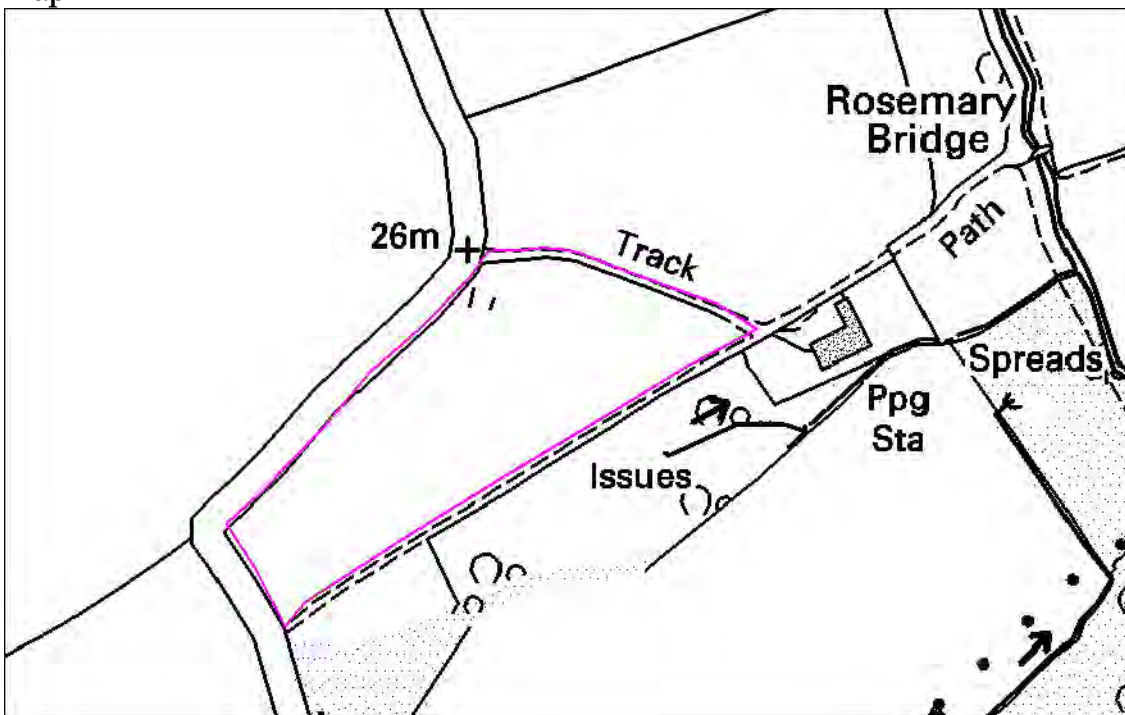
Autumnal Rustic	<i>Paradiarsia glareosa glareosa</i>
Blood-Vein	<i>Timandra griseata</i>
Broom Moth	<i>Ceramica pisi</i>
Broom-Tip	<i>Chesias rufata</i>
Brown-Spot Pinion	<i>Agrochola litura</i>
Buff Ermine	<i>Spilosoma luteum</i>
Centre-Barred Sallow	<i>Atethmia centrigo</i>
Cinnabar	<i>Tyria jacobaeae</i>
Dark Spinach	<i>Pelurga comitata</i>
Dark-Barred Twin-Spot Carpet	<i>Xanthorhoe ferrugata</i>
Deep-Brown Dart	<i>Aporophyla lutulenta</i>
Dot Moth	<i>Melanchra persicariae</i>
Double Dart	<i>Graphiphora augur</i>
Ear Moth	<i>Amphipoea oculatea</i>
Feathered Gothic	<i>Tholera decimalis</i>
Flounced Chestnut	<i>Agrochola helvola</i>
Garden Tiger	<i>Arctia caja</i>
Goat Moth	<i>Cossus cossus</i>
Green-Brindled Crescent	<i>Allophyes oxyacanthae</i>
Grey Dagger	<i>Acrionicta psi</i>
Heath Rustic	<i>Xestia agathina</i>
Hedge Rustic	<i>Tholera cespitis</i>
Knotgrass	<i>Acrionicta rumicis</i>
Lackey	<i>Malacosoma neustria</i>
Latticed Heath	<i>Semiothisa clathrata</i>
Lunar Yellow Underwing	<i>Noctua orbona</i>
Minor Shoulder-Knot	<i>Brachylomia viminalis</i>
Mottled Rustic	<i>Caradrina morpheus</i>
Mouse Moth	<i>Amphipyra tragopoginis</i>
Oak Hook-Tip	<i>Drepana binaria</i>
Rosy Rustic	<i>Hydraecia micacea</i>
Rustic	<i>Hoplodrina blanda</i>
Sallow	<i>Xanthia icteritia</i>
Shaded Broad-Bar	<i>Scotopteryx chenopodiata</i>
Shoulder-Striped Wainscot	<i>Mythimna comma</i>

Small Emerald	<i>Hemistola chrysoprasaria</i>	
Small Square-Spot	<i>Diarsia rubi</i>	
Spinach	<i>Eulithis mellinata</i>	
Small Phoenix	<i>Ecliptopera silaceata</i>	
Streak	<i>Chesias legatella</i>	
V-Moth	<i>Semiothisa wauaria</i>	
White Ermine	<i>Spilosoma lubricipeda</i>	
White-mantled wainscot	<i>Archanara neurica</i>	
Butterflies		
Silver-Studded Blue	<i>Plebejus argus</i>	P
Reptiles		
Grass Snake	<i>Natrix natrix</i>	P
Slow-Worm	<i>Anguis fragilis</i>	P
Viviparous Lizard	<i>Lacerta vivipara</i>	P
Amphibians		
Common Toad	<i>Bufo bufo</i>	
Bony fish		
Eel	<i>Anguilla anguilla</i>	
Avifauna		
Bittern	<i>Botaurus stellaris</i>	P Occasional winter migrant
Bullfinch	<i>Pyrrhula pyrrhula</i>	
Dunnock	<i>Prunella modularis</i>	
Cuckoo	<i>Cuculus canorus</i>)	
Herring gull	<i>Larus argentatus</i>	Occasional
House sparrow	<i>Passer domesticus</i>	Very occasional
Lesser spotted woodpecker	<i>Dendrocopos minor</i>	No recent records
Linnet	<i>Carduelis cannabina</i>	
Marsh tit	<i>Parus palustris</i>	No recent records
Reed bunting	<i>Emberiza schoeniclus</i>	No recent records
Song thrush	<i>Turdus philomelos</i>	
Spotted flycatcher	<i>Muscicapa striata</i>	
Starling	<i>Sturnus vulgaris</i>	Very occasional
Turtle dove	<i>Streptopelia turtur</i>	No recent records
Woodlark	<i>Lullula arborea</i>	P
Yellowhammer	<i>Emberiza citrinella</i>	Occasional

Pumping Station Meadow

Site Status: County Wildlife Site
Grid Ref: TM 192476
Location: Tuddenham
Area: 1.88 ha
Date: 17/09/2009
Recorder: Penny Hemphill
Weather conditions: Low cloud cover, cool
Ranking: 2
Conservation Value: High conservation value

Map



Crown Copyright Licence Number 10016410

Photographs



Reedmace encroaching into the meadow vegetation



Marshy area where orchids thrive in shortervegetation

Habitat Types

Lowland meadow, scrub

Subsidiary Habitats

Marshy areas, mature trees.

Site Description

This is a small unmanaged grassland in the Fynn river valley. It is located on a slope with blackthorn and nettle encroaching on the drier areas at the top of the slope where the grassland is dominated by false oat grass, creeping thistle and creeping bent. At the foot of the slope the ground is quite boggy and it is here that the main floristic interest lies although reedmace is beginning to encroach along with abundant rush species, common fleabane, great willowherb and creeping thistle. Where the sward is shorter there are numerous spikes of southern marsh orchid, birds-foot trefoil, water mint and red fescue. There is an area of scrub beside the pumping station.

Protected Species

Otter *Lutra lutra* and water vole *Arvicola terrestris* in the River Fynn which is adjacent to the site.

Protected Species Potential

Bats, barn owl *Tyto alba*

BAP Habitats Present

-

BAP Species Seen

Toad *Bufo bufo*

BAP Species known

Otter and water vole.

BAP Species Potential

Slow worm *Anguis fragilis* and grass snake *Natrix natrix*, bats

Connectivity

Excellent. The site is located beside the River Fynn and is part of a series of meadows which extend the length of the valley from Tuddenham and beyond Playford. There are some substantial areas of woodland and the meadows are connected by hedges and ditches. The River Fynn provides an excellent wildlife corridor especially for otter and water vole.

Structural Diversity

Excellent structural diversity with mature trees, scrub, tall herb fen vegetation and grassland.

Flora:

Species recorded include: Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus*, false oat grass *Arrhenatherum elatius*, creeping bent *Agrostis stolonifera*, creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense*, ground ivy *Glechoma hederacea*, common fleabane *Pulicaria dysenterica*, willow *Salix* spp, yarrow *Achillea millefolium*, bittersweet *Solanum dulcamara*, angelica *Angelica sylvestris*, ground elder *Aegopodium podagraria*, red fescue *Festuca rubra*, reedmace *Typha latifolia*, bird's-foot trefoil *Lotus corniculatus*, selfheal *Prunella vulgaris*, southern marsh orchid *Dactylorhiza praetermissa*, prickly sow-thistle *Sonchus asper*, field horsetail *Equisetum arvense*, creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens*, soft rush *Juncus effusus*, hard rush *Juncus inflexus*, common ragwort *Senecio jacobaea*, great willowherb *Epilobium hirsutum*, water mint *Mentha*

aquatica, common sedge *Carex nigra*, nettle *Urtica dioica*, red campion *Silene dioica*, cocksfoot *Dactylis glomerata*, silverweed *Potentilla anserina*, bramble *Rubus fruticosus*, hogweed *Heracleum sphondylium*, oak *Quercus robur*, elder *Sambucus nigra*, blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*, dogwood *Cornus sanguinea*, curled dock *Rumex crispus*, field bindweed *Convolvulus arvensis* and perforate St John's-wort *Hypericum perforatum*.

Avifauna:

It was too late in the season for a breeding bird survey. The mature trees, scrub and tall marshy vegetation provide excellent habitat for resident and migrant species. Species recorded during the survey: blackbird *Turdus merula*, robin *Erithacus rubecula*, blue tit *Parus caeruleus*, crow *Corvus corone corone*, wood pigeon *Columba palumbus*, wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Invertebrate:

The site provides excellent habitat for the groups *Lepidoptera*, *Odonata* and *Orthoptera*. Weather conditions were unsuitable for these groups on the day of the survey.

Herpetofauna:

The site provides potential habitat for slow worm and grass snake.

Mammals:

Rabbit *Oryctolagus cuniculus*, fox *Vulpes vulpes*

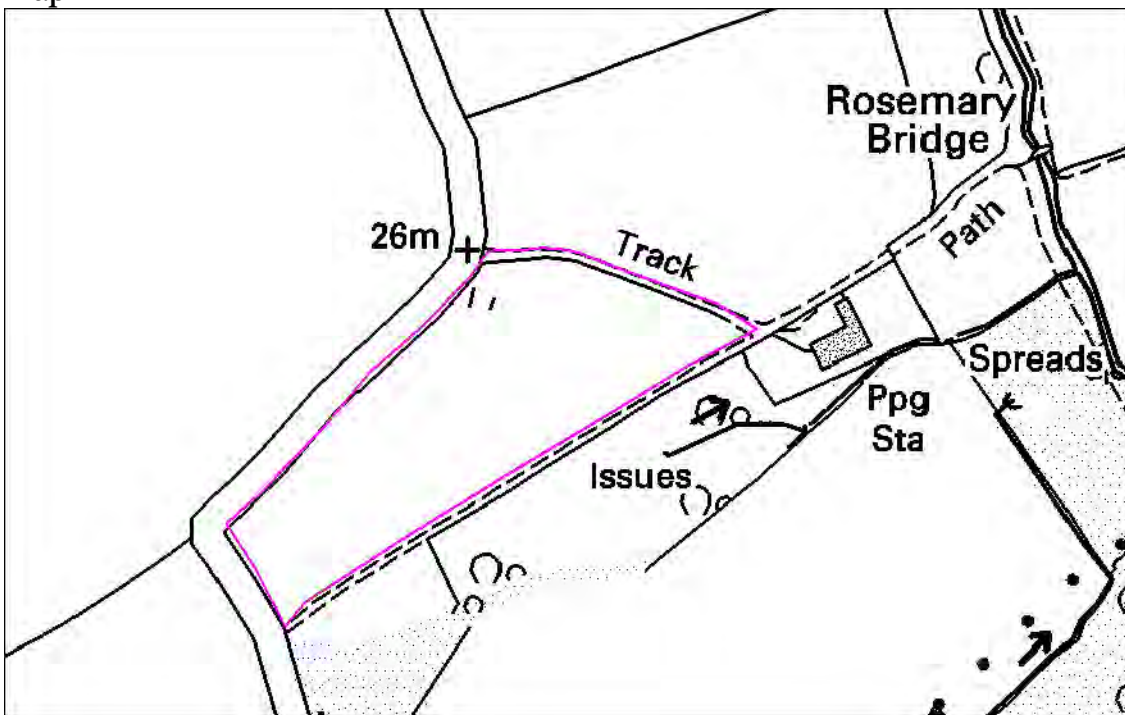
Comments & Recommendations

The site is unmanaged and the sward is tall with tangled vegetation making access to some parts of the site difficult. There are areas of shorter vegetation where the orchids are still present and floristic diversity increases. The majority of the site is dominated by large stands of false oat grass, creeping bent, reed-mace, common fleabane, great willowherb, rush and creeping thistle. It is recommended that this meadow is cut in late summer. There is a mature oak which would be an ideal location for a barn owl box.

Pumping Station Meadow

Site Status: County Wildlife Site
Grid Ref: TM 192476
Location: Tuddenham
Area: 1.88 ha
Date: 17/09/2009
Recorder: Penny Hemphill
Weather conditions: Low cloud cover, cool
Ranking: 2
Conservation Value: High conservation value

Map



Crown Copyright Licence Number 10016410

Photographs



Reedmace encroaching into the meadow vegetation



Marshy area where orchids thrive in shortervegetation

Habitat Types

Lowland meadow, scrub

Subsidiary Habitats

Marshy areas, mature trees.

Site Description

This is a small unmanaged grassland in the Fynn river valley. It is located on a slope with blackthorn and nettle encroaching on the drier areas at the top of the slope where the grassland is dominated by false oat grass, creeping thistle and creeping bent. At the foot of the slope the ground is quite boggy and it is here that the main floristic interest lies although reedmace is beginning to encroach along with abundant rush species, common fleabane, great willowherb and creeping thistle. Where the sward is shorter there are numerous spikes of southern marsh orchid, birds-foot trefoil, water mint and red fescue. There is an area of scrub beside the pumping station.

Protected Species

Otter *Lutra lutra* and water vole *Arvicola terrestris* in the River Fynn which is adjacent to the site.

Protected Species Potential

Bats, barn owl *Tyto alba*

BAP Habitats Present

-

BAP Species Seen

Toad *Bufo bufo*

BAP Species known

Otter and water vole.

BAP Species Potential

Slow worm *Anguis fragilis* and grass snake *Natrix natrix*, bats

Connectivity

Excellent. The site is located beside the River Fynn and is part of a series of meadows which extend the length of the valley from Tuddenham and beyond Playford. There are some substantial areas of woodland and the meadows are connected by hedges and ditches. The River Fynn provides an excellent wildlife corridor especially for otter and water vole.

Structural Diversity

Excellent structural diversity with mature trees, scrub, tall herb fen vegetation and grassland.

Flora:

Species recorded include: Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus*, false oat grass *Arrhenatherum elatius*, creeping bent *Agrostis stolonifera*, creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense*, ground ivy *Glechoma hederacea*, common fleabane *Pulicaria dysenterica*, willow *Salix* spp, yarrow *Achillea millefolium*, bittersweet *Solanum dulcamara*, angelica *Angelica sylvestris*, ground elder *Aegopodium podagraria*, red fescue *Festuca rubra*, reedmace *Typha latifolia*, bird's-foot trefoil *Lotus corniculatus*, selfheal *Prunella vulgaris*, southern marsh orchid *Dactylorhiza praetermissa*, prickly sow-thistle *Sonchus asper*, field horsetail *Equisetum arvense*, creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens*, soft rush *Juncus effusus*, hard rush *Juncus inflexus*, common ragwort *Senecio jacobaea*, great willowherb *Epilobium hirsutum*, water mint *Mentha*

aquatica, common sedge *Carex nigra*, nettle *Urtica dioica*, red campion *Silene dioica*, cocksfoot *Dactylis glomerata*, silverweed *Potentilla anserina*, bramble *Rubus fruticosus*, hogweed *Heracleum sphondylium*, oak *Quercus robur*, elder *Sambucus nigra*, blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*, dogwood *Cornus sanguinea*, curled dock *Rumex crispus*, field bindweed *Convolvulus arvensis* and perforate St John's-wort *Hypericum perforatum*.

Avifauna:

It was too late in the season for a breeding bird survey. The mature trees, scrub and tall marshy vegetation provide excellent habitat for resident and migrant species. Species recorded during the survey: blackbird *Turdus merula*, robin *Erithacus rubecula*, blue tit *Parus caeruleus*, crow *Corvus corone corone*, wood pigeon *Columba palumbus*, wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Invertebrate:

The site provides excellent habitat for the groups *Lepidoptera*, *Odonata* and *Orthoptera*. Weather conditions were unsuitable for these groups on the day of the survey.

Herpetofauna:

The site provides potential habitat for slow worm and grass snake.

Mammals:

Rabbit *Oryctolagus cuniculus*, fox *Vulpes vulpes*

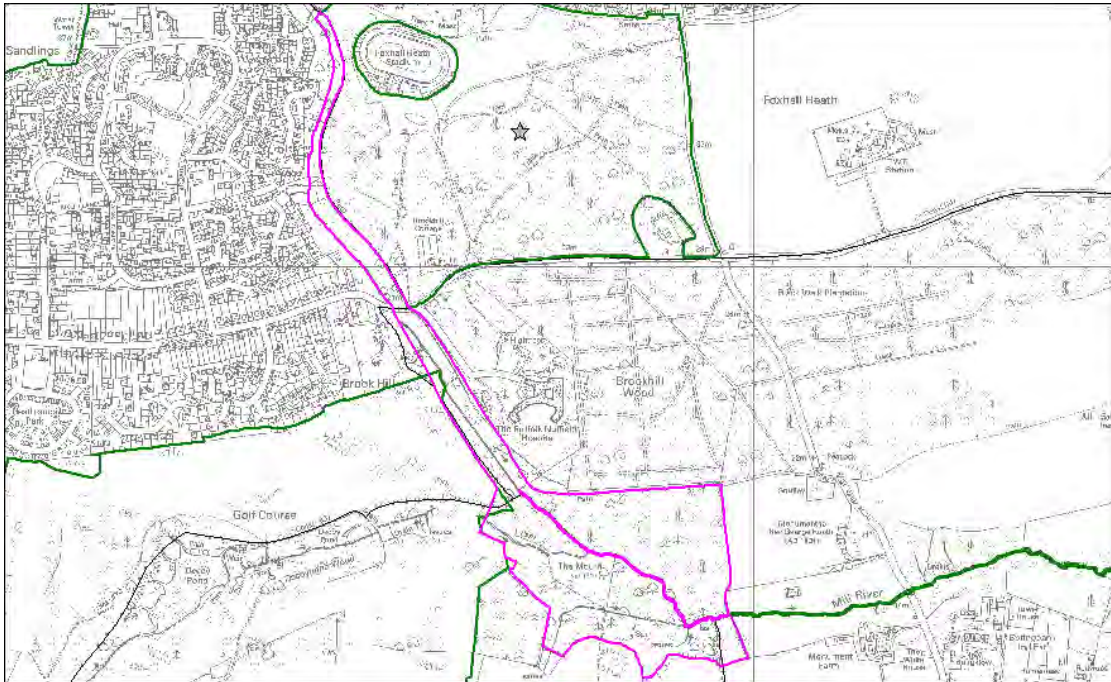
Comments & Recommendations

The site is unmanaged and the sward is tall with tangled vegetation making access to some parts of the site difficult. There are areas of shorter vegetation where the orchids are still present and floristic diversity increases. The majority of the site is dominated by large stands of false oat grass, creeping bent, reed-mace, common fleabane, great willowherb, rush and creeping thistle. It is recommended that this meadow is cut in late summer. There is a mature oak which would be an ideal location for a barn owl box.

The Mount

Site status	County Wildlife Site
Grid reference	TM 2125 4382
Location	Purdis Farm/Foxhall/Rushmere St Andrew
Area	43.82 Hectares
Date	10 July 2009
Recorder	T Seagon, P Hemphill
Weather conditions	Sunny, light breeze, 18°C
Ranking	2
Biodiversity value	High conservation value

Map



Crown Copyright Licence Number 10016410

Photograph



Woodland with veteran oak showing bracken under story.

Habitat types

Broadleaved woodland
Stream/river

Subsidiary habitats

Ponds, osier bed

Site description.

A linear site the north portion of which forms the western border of Foxhall Stadium Wood. The Mill River runs through the CWS, passing under the Foxhall Road that bisects the site. In the southern portion of the CWS the Mill River becomes a CWS in its own right. Footpaths are well maintained and well used and the Sandlings path runs through the section south of the road. The town's Jubilee Walk runs through the northern section of the site and the Sandlings long distance path through the south.

Protected species

Water vole *Arvicola terrestris*.

Protected species potential

Bats, great crested newt *Triturus cristatus*

BAP habitats present

Lowland mixed deciduous woodland, ponds

BAP species seen

-

BAP species known

Water vole

The following bird species were noted in a 1990 survey:

Turtle dove *Streptopelia turtur*

Dunnock *Prunella modularis*

Song thrush *Turdus philomelos*

Starling *Sturnus vulgaris*

House sparrow *Passer domesticus*

Bullfinch *Pyrrhula pyrrhula*

BAP species potential

Bats, water shrew *Neomys fodiens*, willow tit *Poecile montanus*

Connectivity

Good. The north part of the site is adjacent to the western edge of Foxhall Stadium Wood. The south to Brookhill Wood, part of which is included in the CWS, Ipswich Golf Course CWS is to the west, Ipswich Heaths SSSI to the south. The Mill River continues east through farm land.

Structural diversity

Good. This is predominately a woodland site but contains a variety species and age classes of tree with varied shrub and ground layers. Lower lying areas are wet/marshy with attendant vegetation. Both standing and fallen dead wood is present.

Flora

In the north the site is narrow with a path running beside the water course which has a series of ponds in it. Foxhall Stadium Wood CWS is immediately to the east and the banks which rise steeply from the path has an open woodland flora similar to that site. The water course and ponds have plant species typical of wetland habitats including common reed *Phragmites australis*, reedmace *Typha latifolia*, lesser water-parsnip *Berula erecta* and meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria*. Hart's tongue fern *Phyllitis scolopendrium* was noted growing in a sluice on this section of the water course.

South of the Foxhall road before the path diverges there is a dense under storey with nettle. Occasional large hazel coppice stools are present next to the path. The woodland on the higher ground is of oak *Quercus robur* and silver birch *Betula pendula* with a bracken and bramble understorey. Moving south more sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus* becomes apparent several saplings present. There are also "high" coppice stools of sweet chestnut *Castanea sativa* where trees have been cut half way between coppice and pollard height.

On the lower ground there is more alder *Alnus glutinosa* amongst the trees. The sides of the stream support large populations of opposite leaved golden saxifrage *Chrysosplenium oppositifolium* with occasional southern marsh orchid *Dactylorhiza praetermissa* beside the path. Other plants associated with the wet areas included hemp agrimony *Eupatorium cannabinum*, floating sweet grass *Glyceria fluitans*, pendulous sedge *Carex pendula*, meadowsweet and marsh thistle *Cirsium palustre*. Quantities of liverworts were also present on the river banks.

Avifauna

A previous survey found over thirty bird species in this woodland with a number of what are now BAP species (see above) present. Species noted during this visit included moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*, blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*, goldcrest *Regulus regulus* and great spotted woodpecker *Dendrocopos major*. Wet woodland offers suitable habitat for willow tit which is now a BAP species.

Invertebrates

Good quantities of dead wood will benefit this group. The mix of wet and dry habitats will increase the diversity. Common blue damselfly *Enallagma cyathigerum* were seen on the ponds and large red damselfly *Pyrrosoma nymphula* have been previously recorded in good numbers.

Herpetofauna

The damp nature of a large part of this site make it highly suitable for widespread amphibians and grass snake. Ponds in the northern section might support great crested newt.

Mammals

Veteran trees will provide suitable roosting habitats for bats with the damp woodland providing good foraging areas. Where ponds are present they may support water vole. Although no signs were noted during the visit there is a 2006 record from "stream at Foxhall Stadium Wood which is actually within this site.

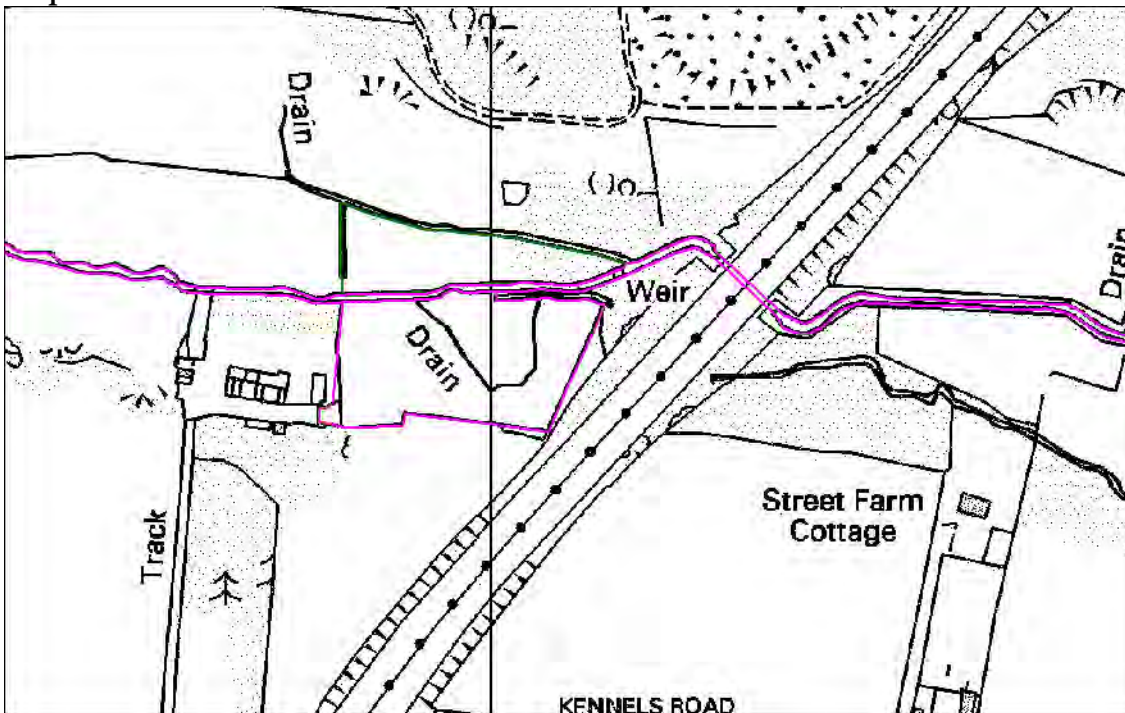
Comments and recommendations

Observations were made from footpaths. The northern section of this site is well managed for amenity use. Although less management is in evidence in the southern section footpaths are kept clear and maintained. Other than keeping paths clear the southern sections of this site need little management although some of the hazel coppice stools might benefit from careful attention given their maturity.

Valley Farm Meadow

Site Status: County Wildlife Site
Grid Ref: TM 23936 43401
Location: Brightwell
Area: 1.5 ha
Date: 10/07/2009
Recorder: Penny Hemphill
Weather conditions: Sunny, cool, still
Ranking: 2 as a CWS but needs reviewing
Conservation Value: High conservation value

Map



Crown Copyright Licence Number 10016410

Photographs



South of the Mill River – nettles, willowherb



North of the Mill River – ditch on the right

Habitat Types:

North of the Mill River – Wet grassland and ditch
South of the Mill River – Tall ruderal plant community
River

Subsidiary Habitats:

Standing and fallen dead wood.

Site Description:

Site is located between the A12 embankment and Valley Farm (now derelict) and extends to the north and south of the Mill River. There is a public footpath through the site. The Mill River flows through the middle of the site and is tree-lined with alders on both banks. North of the river, the grassland is grazed by cattle, south of the river the vegetation is dominated by stands of nettles and willowherb, is overgrown and species poor.

Protected Species:

Otter *Lutra lutra* and water vole *Arvicola terrestris*

Protected Species Potential

Bats, barn owl *Tyto alba*, water shrew *Neomys fodiens*, slow worm *Anguis fragilis* and grass snake *Natrix natrix*.

BAP Habitats Present

Lowland wet meadow

BAP Species Seen

-

BAP Species known

Otter and water vole.

BAP Species Potential

Slow worm, grass snake, water shrew, bats, barn owl

Connectivity

The site is surrounded by arable land and woodland on all boundaries apart from the eastern boundary which is the A12. The Mill River provides an excellent wildlife corridor especially for otter and water vole.

Structural Diversity

Good structural diversity with trees, scrub, tall ruderal vegetation and grassland.

Flora:

Flora to the north of the river is dominated by grasses including Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus*, marsh foxtail *Alopecurus geniculatus* and creeping bent *Agrostis stolonifera*, with associate species including field horsetail *Equisetum arvense*, marsh thistle *Cirsium palustre*, creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens*, soft rush *Juncus effusus*, redshank *Polygonum persicaria*, common ragwort *Senecio jacobaea* and great willowherb *Epilobium hirsutum*. The ditch vegetation is dominated by branched bur-reed *Sparganium erectum*, lesser water-parsnip *Berula erecta* and lesser pond-sedge *Carex acutiformis*, with water mint *Mentha aquatica*, common sedge *Carex nigra*, blunt flowered rush *Juncus subnodulosus* and water dock *Rumex hydrolopathum* also occurring. South of the Mill River, the

vegetation is dominated by nettles *Urtica dioica*, great willowherb, creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense*, red campion *Silene dioica*, cocksfoot *Dactylis glomerata*, silverweed *Potentilla anserina*, ground ivy *Glechoma hederacea*, bramble *Rubus fruticosus*, meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria*, hogweed *Heracleum sphondylium* and false oat grass *Arrhenatherum elatius*.

Avifauna:

It was too late in the season for a breeding bird survey, and apart from the surrounding trees there is little suitable habitat for birds.

Invertebrate:

Lepidoptera: Small tortoiseshell *Aglais urticae*, meadow brown *Maniola jurtina*, ringlet *Aphantopus hyperantus*, large white *Pieris brassicae*

Odonata: Azure damselfly

Orthoptera: crickets and grasshoppers

Ladybirds and bumblebees

Herpetofauna:

None seen

Mammals:

Rabbit *Oryctolagus cuniculus*, mole *Talpa caeca*

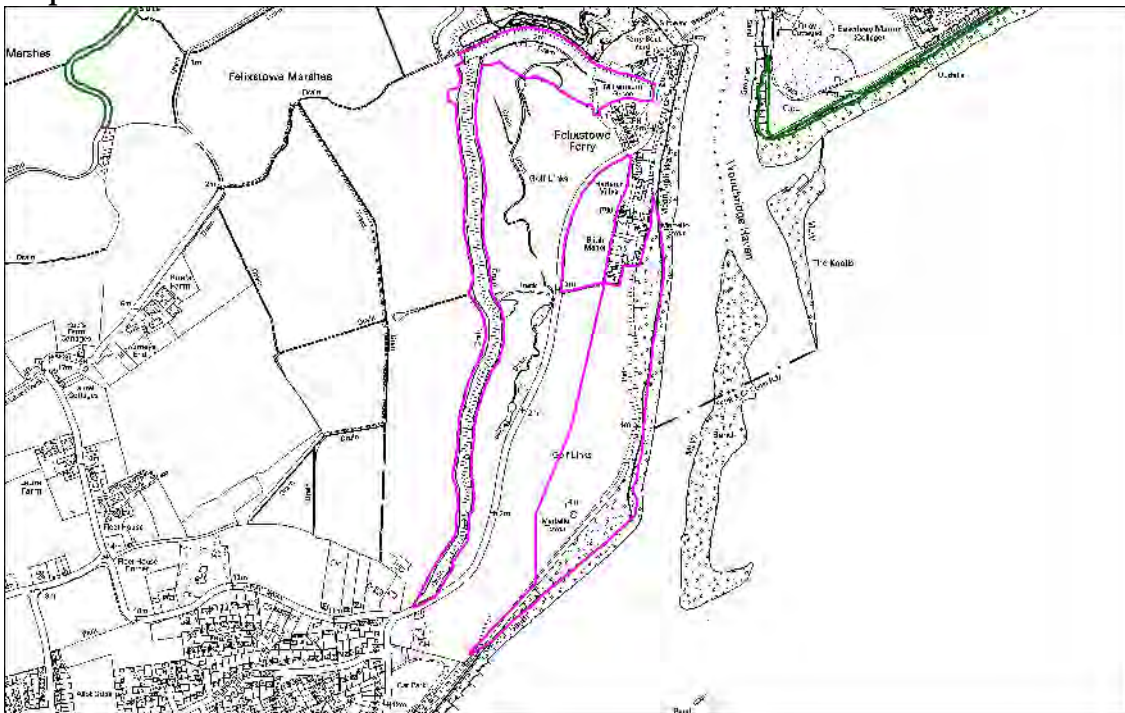
Comments & Recommendations

North of the Mill River – This section of the site has been managed by cattle grazing. The thistles and nettles had recently been sprayed with herbicide. The ditch is heavily vegetated with no open water and the banks are ill-defined and poached by stock although recent water vole activity was recorded in it. South of the Mill River, there has been no management and the site is overgrown and dominated by large stands of nettles and as a consequence floristic diversity has been reduced. Cattle grazing or cutting would benefit this southern section of the site and prevent the whole site reverting to tall rank nettle dominated vegetation. The CWS designation of this site should be re-assessed.

Felixstowe Ferry

Site Status: County Wildlife Site
Grid Ref: TM 326372
Location: Felixstowe
Area: 25.5 ha
Date: 03/09/2009
Recorder: Penny Hemphill
Weather conditions: Cloud cover, strong wind
Ranking: 2
Conservation Value: High conservation value

Map



Crown Copyright Licence Number 10016410

Photographs



Rough grassland area along raised bund



Strimmed bank: reptile mitigation prior to EA bank strengthening works by EA



Ditch habitat – water voles present

Habitat Types:

Unimproved rough grassland, ditches, unimproved short grassland, scrub

Subsidiary Habitats:

Reedbed areas adjacent to ditches

Site Description:

Felixstowe Ferry and its surroundings comprise a diverse range of semi-natural habitat that supports a wide range of wildlife. The Deben river and its saltmarshes are already designated as an SSSI and the vegetated shingle at the Ferry is included in the Suffolk Shingle Beaches CWS. In 2003, further survey work has been carried out that has provided additional and up to date information on the Felixstowe Ferry area, resulting in the designation of the Felixstowe Ferry CWS. The site comprises a number of different linked habitats: The Tomline Wall runs along the west of the site, and is a man-made flood defence bank with dykes either side. Rough grassland on the bank provides important habitat for slow-worm, grass-snake, several species of birds including meadow pipit (Amber status) and skylark (BAP species), a wide range of invertebrates including several species of butterfly. Reed warbler and reed bunting (BAP species) have been recorded in the reed beds adjacent to the dykes and the dykes themselves are a stronghold for water voles (BAP species). At the northern end of the Tomline wall there is an area of rough grassland/scrub that is partially inundated by brackish water giving rise to an interesting mix of species suited to both freshwater and brackish plants. Of particular note is the population of grass vetchling. The nationally scarce shrubby seablite was recorded on the river wall in 2003. An area of gorse and dry grassland links the above area with the former sand dune ridge on the golf course. This gorse/grass mosaic is important for reptiles with common lizard being recorded there in summer 2003. The former sand dune ridge areas of unimproved sand dune grassland, including sea holly. To the east of the seawall there is a large area vegetated shingle supporting the characteristic plants of this nationally rare habitat such as sea pea, yellow

horned poppy, and sea kale. Parts of the sand dune ridge and the shingle area were formerly part of the Suffolk Shingle Beaches CWS. In 2003, they have been incorporated into the Felixstowe Ferry CWS and the boundaries of the Suffolk Shingle Beaches CWS amended accordingly.

Protected Species

Water vole *Arvicola terrestris* – evidence of this species was recorded during the survey along the ditches. Common lizard *Lacerta vivipara* recently recorded on the bank adjacent to the river.

Protected Species Potential

Barn owl *Tyto alba*, otter *Lutra lutra*, grass snake *Natrix natrix*, slow worm *Anguis fragilis*

BAP Habitats Present

Reedbed

BAP Species Seen

-

BAP Species known

Water vole and common lizard, skylark *Alauda arvensis*, reed warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*, reed bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*, toad *Bufo bufo*, brown hare *Lepus europaeus*.

BAP Species Potential

Otter, grass snake, slow worm

Connectivity

The site is on the edge of the Deben estuary adjacent to the Felixstowe marshes which supports a network of ditches providing excellent connectivity to the surrounding land.

Structural Diversity

Good. There are occasional trees and scrub, which along with the rough grassland, reedbed areas and short cut grass on the Millennium Green increase the structural diversity of the site.

Flora:

The timing of this survey put constraints on the botanical assessment of this site and further survey in the spring will be required to gain a comprehensive assessment of the current spring and early summer flora of the site. Common reed *Phragmites australis* along the ditches, false oat grass *Arrhenatherum elatius*, cocksfoot *Dactylis glomerata*, creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense*, bracken *Pteridium aquilinum*, rye grass *Lolium perenne*, red clover *Trifolium pratense*, sea beet *Beta vulgaris* subsp *maritima*, curled dock *Rumex crispus*, yarrow *Achillea millefolium*, redshank *Polygonum persicaria*, common mallow *Malva sylvestris*, tormentil *Potentilla erecta*, cat's ear *Hypochaeris radicata*, bristly ox-tongue *Picris echioides*, bramble *Rubus fruticosus*, dittander *Lepidium latifolium*, ragwort *Senecio jacobaea*, hogweed *Heracleum sphondylium*, mugwort *Artemisia vulgaris*, sea couch *Elytrigia juncea*, sea kale *Crambe maritima* and sea holly *Eryngium maritimum*.

Avifauna:

It was too late in the season for a breeding bird survey however the reed-fringed stream is good habitat for reed warbler and sedge warbler. Swallow *Hirundo rustica*, wood pigeon *Columba oenas* and blue tit *Parus caeruleus* were recorded.

Invertebrate:

Strong winds on the day of survey made conditions unsuitable for invertebrates. The site provides good habitat for a variety of invertebrate groups including *Lepidoptera*, *Odonata* and

Orthoptera

Herpetofauna:

The site provides potential habitat for reptiles and amphibians.

Mammals:

Rabbit *Oryctolagus cuniculus*

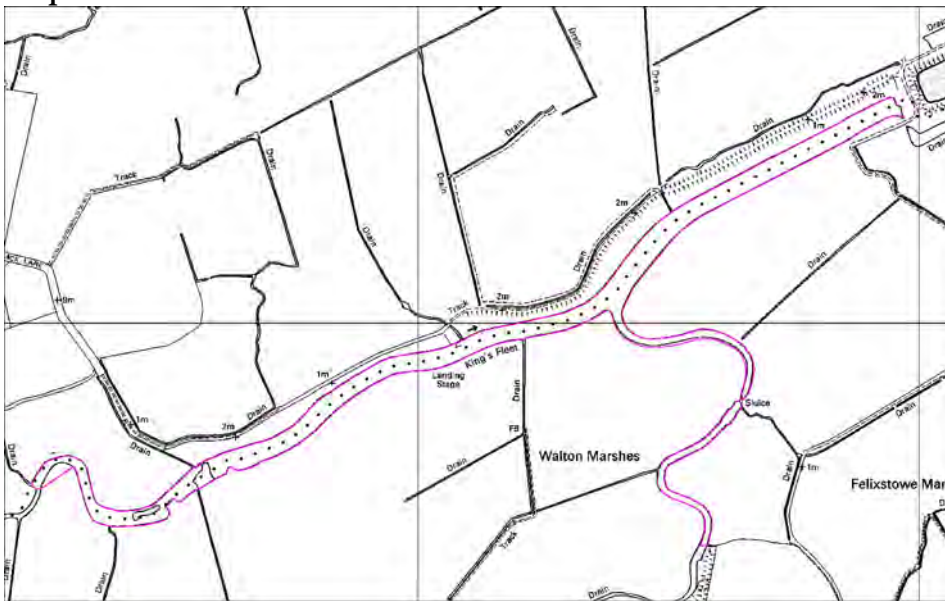
Comments & Recommendations

Current management is maintaining the high biodiversity value of this site. The river bank has been strimmed recently which is part of some reptile mitigation being undertaken by the Environment Agency prior to re-strengthening work on the bank. This work will continue into 2010.

Kingsfleet

Site Status: County Wildlife Site
Grid Ref: TM 310380
Location: Felixstowe marshes
Area: 8.6 ha
Date: 18/08/2009
Recorder: Penny Hemphill
Weather conditions: Sunny, hot, strong breeze
Ranking: 2
Conservation Value: High conservation value

Map



Crown Copyright Licence Number 10016410

Photograph



View of Kingsfleet from the eastern end

Habitat Types:

Open standing water

Subsidiary Habitats:

Fringe of reedbed around the water-body and connecting ditches

Site Description:

Kingsfleet is an extensive area of open water situated close to the River Deben lower estuary. It is essentially a freshwater lake fed by springs, although there may be a seepage of brackish water through the sea wall at the eastern end. It is fringed by common reed and there are several bankside trees around the western end of the water-body. According to previous records the site is used by a large number of birds in the summer including yellow wagtail, bearded tit, swallow and a good range of wetland birds including reed and sedge warblers, coot, little grebe and tufted duck breed amongst the tall emergent plants. The site is also excellent habitat for otter and water vole. The fishing rights of Kingsfleet are leased to a local fishing club.

Protected Species:

Otter *Lutra lutra* and water vole *Arvicola terrestris* – evidence of both these species was recorded during the survey.

Protected Species Potential

The water-body provides a potential feeding site for bats and there is suitable habitat for grass snake *Natrix natrix*. At the eastern end the river wall provides excellent habitat for common lizard *Lacerta vivipara*.

BAP Habitats Present

Reedbed

BAP Species Seen

-

BAP Species known

Otter and water vole . Toad *Bufo bufo* reported on the river wall to the east.

BAP Species Potential

Bats, grass snake, reed warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*, reed bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Connectivity

Kingsfleet makes up part of a network of connecting water-courses which drain Felixstowe and Falkenham marshes. These natural wildlife corridors provide a refuge for a number of species particularly water vole. The adjacent land is arable.

Structural Diversity

Good structural diversity with trees, reedbed and ditch habitat. There is a belt of rough grassland along the western bank which adds to the overall structure of the site

Flora:

Common reed *Phragmites australis* dominates the bankside vegetation around the perimeter of Kingsfleet. There are few associate species which include great willowherb *Epilobium hirsutum*, water mint *Mentha aquatica*, water dock *Rumex hydrolopathum*, bittersweet *Solanum dulcamara* and hemp agrimony *Eupatorium cannabinum*. There are a number of willow *Salix* spp around the perimeter of the lake.

Avifauna:

It was too late in the season for a breeding bird survey however reed warbler was recorded singing, and mute swans *Cygnus olor* were seen.

Invertebrate:

Lepidoptera: large white *Pieris brassicae*, painted lady *Cynthia cardui*

Odonata: Azure damselfly, large blue dragonfly

Orthoptera: crickets and grasshoppers

Bumblebees

Herpetofauna:

None seen but common lizard and toad known on the eastern section of the river wall.

Mammals:

Rabbit *Oryctolagus cuniculus*, fox *Vulpes vulpes*

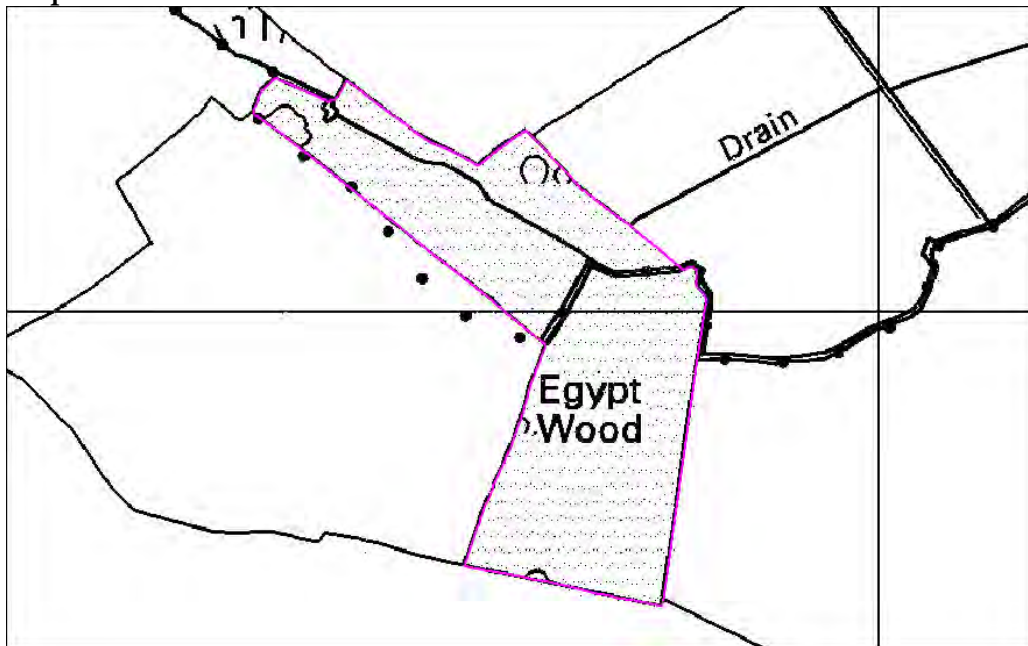
Comments & Recommendations

The site is managed by Kingsfleet Angling Club and there are a number of fishing platforms located around the perimeter of the water-body. Current management is maintaining the biodiversity value of the site for otter, water vole and migrant and breeding birds.

Egypt Wood

Site Status: County Wildlife Site
Grid Ref: TM 288369
Location: Felixstowe
Area: 2.5ha
Date: 15/09/2009
Recorder: Penny Hemphill
Weather conditions: Low cloud, rain and strong wind
Ranking: 2
Conservation Value: High conservation value

Map



Crown Copyright Licence Number 10016410

Photograph



View of Egypt Wood from adjacent arable land

Habitat Types:

Ancient broad-leaf woodland, stream, scrub

Subsidiary Habitats:

Ditches, lying and standing dead wood

Site Description:

A small woodland of ash, oak and sycamore with a significant amount of mature holly. During this survey the ground flora had gone over so it was impossible to assess the diversity. The existing citation states 'The ground flora is reasonably diverse with a range of typical species such as primrose, lords-and- ladies, herb-robert, bluebell and male fern. The wood, although not appearing in English Nature's Ancient Woodland Inventory may be of considerable antiquity as it supports a diverse ground flora including early purple and twayblade orchids and sanicle. Additional species recorded for this area are crosswort, brooklime, greater knapweed and kingcup.' Further survey in the spring will be required to verify this description. The woodland is important for shelter and breeding sites for invertebrates and birds in an area with very little woodland. A smaller area (1.2 hectares) of damp scrub lies adjacent to the wood and a stream flows through the northern end which increases the habitat diversity of the site.

Protected Species:

-

Protected Species Potential

Otter *Lutra lutra*, bats, badger *Meles meles*, bats

BAP Habitats Present

Lowland mixed deciduous woodland

BAP Species Seen

-

BAP Species known

-

BAP Species Potential

Bats, badger, otter, stag beetle

Connectivity

Good. The woodland is located in the middle of arable land with connecting hedges and ditches throughout the surrounding farmland. The stream drains to the east into Kingsfleet and Falkenham marshes with its extensive network of drainage ditches.

Structural Diversity

Good structural diversity with a dense canopy of mature trees, numerous young saplings, scrub and an understorey of nettles and ivy.

Flora:

The timing of this survey put constraints on the botanical assessment of this site. The following species were recorded: nettle *Urtica dioica*, , oak *Quercus robur*, ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, hazel *Corylus avellana*, elder *Sambucus nigra*, spear thistle *Cirsium vulgare*, bramble *Rubus fruticosus*, creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense*, sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus*, holly *Ilex aquifolium*, sweet chestnut *Castanea sativa*, hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, ivy *Hedera helix*, ground ivy *Glechoma hederacea*,

Avifauna:

It was too late in the season for a breeding bird survey. The woodland provides potential breeding habitat for resident and migrant species. Robin *Erithacus rubecula*, blackbird *Turdus merula* and wood pigeon *Columba palumbus* were recorded.

Invertebrate:

Strong winds on the day of survey made conditions unsuitable for invertebrates. The site provides good habitat for a variety of invertebrate groups including *Coleoptera*.

Herpetofauna:

-

Mammals:

Rabbit *Oryctolagus cuniculus*, fox *Vulpes vulpes*

Comments & Recommendations

The woodland is used as pheasant cover and there are structures within the woodland to house and feed game birds.

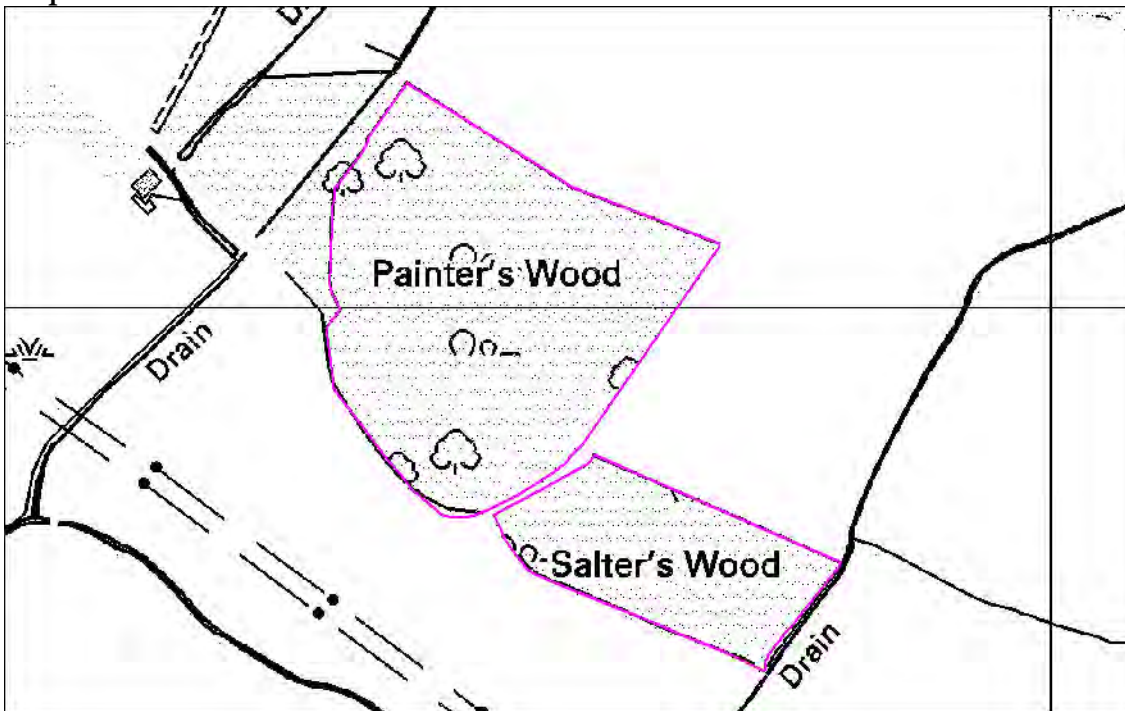
There has been no obvious management undertaken apart from some of the ivy growing up the mature trees has been cut.

The site is owned by Trinity College and managed by Bidwells.

Painters/Salters Wood

Site Status: County Wildlife Site
Grid Ref: TM 267360
Location: Trimley
Area: 4.46 ha
Date: 15/09/2009
Recorder: Penny Hemphill
Weather conditions: Low cloud, rain and strong wind
Ranking: 2 as CWS but needs reviewing
Conservation Value: High conservation value

Map



Crown Copyright Licence Number 10016410

Photograph



Elm die back on woodland edge

Habitat Types:

Mixed deciduous woodland

Subsidiary Habitats:

Lying and standing dead wood

Site Description:

These two ancient woodlands adjoin each other, close to the River Orwell and SWT Trimley Nature Reserve. The woods are bounded in parts by remnants of a ditch and bank system which is a characteristic feature of medieval woods. Both woods have an open structure, dominated by ash, with some areas of sweet chestnut and sycamore is also frequent. About 10% of Painter's Wood has been planted with conifers with additional broadleaf species also planted within the last ten years. The shrub layer is sparse, with the exception of a small amount of hazel coppice at the northern end of Painter's Wood. The ground flora has been affected by fertiliser drift from adjacent arable fields and as a result is dominated by grass and bramble. A substantial amount of lying and standing dead wood provides excellent habitat for woodpeckers and invertebrates.

Protected Species:

-

Protected Species Potential

Bats, badger *Meles meles*.

BAP Habitats Present

Lowland mixed deciduous woodland

BAP Species Seen

Brown hare *Lepus capensis*

BAP Species known

Brown hare *Lepus capensis*

BAP Species Potential

Bats, badger

Connectivity

Good. The woodland is located adjacent to SWT Trimley Nature Reserve and is linked to other woodland by a series of hedges and ditches. in the middle of arable land with connecting hedges and ditches throughout the surrounding farmland.

Structural Diversity

Good structural diversity with a dense canopy of mature trees, young trees and an understorey of nettles and brambles.

Flora:

The timing of this survey put constraints on the botanical assessment of this site with regard to spring plants. The following species were recorded: nettle *Urtica dioica*, English elm *Ulmus procera*, horse chestnut *Aesculus hippocastanum*, cherry *Prunus avium*, Aspen *Pouulus tremula*, oak *Quercus robur*, ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, hazel *Corylus avellana*, blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*, elder *Sambucus nigra*, sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus*, holly *Ilex aquifolium*, sweet chestnut *Castanea sativa*, hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* and ivy *Hedera helix*. Ground flora species include spear thistle *Cirsium vulgare*,

creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense*, ground ivy *Glechoma hederacea*, scentless mayweed *Tripleurospermum inodorum*, creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens*, nettle *Urtica dioica*, bramble *Rubus fruticosus*, bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* and male fern *Dryopteris filix-mas*.

Avifauna:

It was too late in the season for a breeding bird survey. The woodland provides potential breeding habitat for resident and migrant species. Robin *Erithacus rubecula*, blackbird *Turdus merula*, wood pigeon *Columba palumbus*, buzzard *Buteo buteo*, kestrel *Falco tinnunculus* were recorded.

Invertebrate:

Strong winds on the day of survey made conditions unsuitable for invertebrates. The site provides good habitat for a variety of invertebrate groups including *Coleoptera*.

Herpetofauna:

-

Mammals:

Rabbit *Oryctolagus cuniculus*, fox *Vulpes vulpes*

Comments & Recommendations

The woodland is used as pheasant cover and there are structures within the woodland to house and feed game birds.

There has been no obvious management undertaken apart from some new tree planting within the woodland approximately 10 years ago.

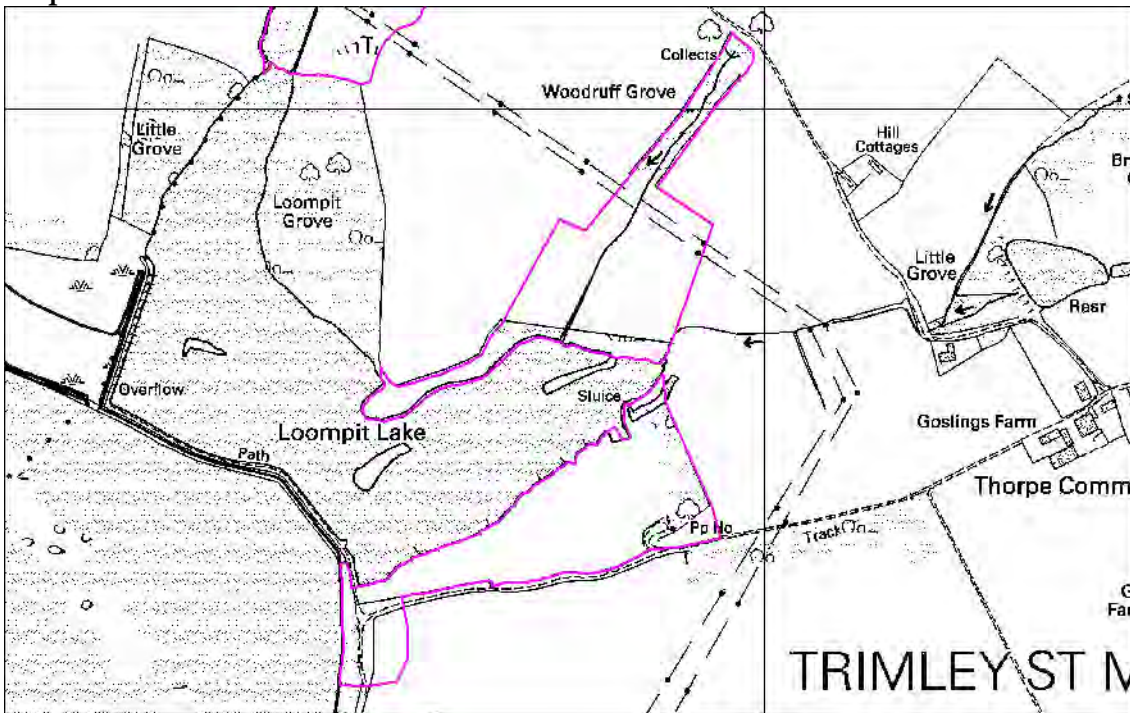
There is considerably elm die back so it is recommended that any elm is coppiced in order to increase longevity of this species.

The site is owned by Trinity College and managed by Bidwells.

Morston Hall Wood

Site Status: County Wildlife Site
Grid Ref: TM 254378
Location: Trimley
Area: 41 ha
Date: 15/09/ 2009
Recorder: Penny Hemphill
Weather conditions: Wet, low cloud, strong wind
Ranking: 2
Conservation Value: High conservation value

Map



Photographs



Alder carr with abundant opposite leaved saxifrage amongst the ground flora



Meadows recently mown and cuttings have not been removed



Fringe of reedmace around the reservoir – excellent water vole habitat

Habitat Types:

Unimproved grassland, mixed deciduous woodland, alder carr, reservoir

Subsidiary Habitats:

Reedbed areas on edge of lake, ditches, standing and fallen dead wood

Site Description:

A mosaic of habitat types located adjacent to the Orwell Estuary SSSI. The reservoir fringed with reedmace is surrounded by broadleaf woodland, wet alder carr, saltmarsh and an area of grassland. According to the existing citation the reservoir attracts large numbers of wild duck during winter, and the meadow supports a large population of heath spotted orchids (one thousand plus). The northern area of woodland adds diversity to the site, providing cover for invertebrates and breeding sites for birds. In addition, it displays an interesting ground flora including wetter marshy areas with opposite-leaved golden saxifrage, yellow flag and brooklime and drier areas with bluebell, moschatel and a small colony of early purple orchids. Loompit Grove on the eastern side of the wood is a remnant ancient woodland appearing in the English Nature's Inventory of Ancient Woodlands. Part of this CWS has been lost to Levington Marina development. Loompit Lake was notified as part of the Orwell Estuary SSSI in 2003.

Protected Species:

Otter *Lutra lutra*, water vole *Arvicola terrestris*, water shrew *Neomys fodiens*, Noctule *Nyctalus noctula*, grass snake *Natrix natrix*, slow worm *Anguis fragilis*, adder *Vipera berus*.

Protected Species Potential

Bats, barn owl *Tyto alba*.

BAP Habitats Present

Saltmarsh, alder carr wet woodland, lowland mixed deciduous woodland

BAP Species Seen

-

BAP Species known

Otter, water vole, Noctule, brown hare *Lepus europaeus*, corn bunting *Miliaria calandra*, grass snake, slow worm, adder.

BAP Species Potential

Grass snake *Natrix natrix*, slow worm *Anguis fragilis*, reed warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*, reed bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*, bats, barn owl.

Connectivity

This site is situated between the Orwell estuary, the Felixstowe to Ipswich railway line and the A14 which limits its potential in the wider countryside. However the site is linked to surrounding arable land by hedges and ditches which provide good corridors for mobile species.

Structural Diversity

Excellent. The mosaic of habitat types provides natural variation in structure with woodland, grassland, scrub and the lake providing endless opportunities for a wide range of taxonomic groups.

Flora:

The timing of this survey put constraints on the botanical assessment of this site with regard to spring plants. Species recorded include: Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus*, false oat grass *Arrhenatherum elatius*, creeping bent *Agrostis stolonifera*, creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense*, ground ivy *Glechoma hederacea*, common fleabane *Pulicaria dysenterica*, willow *Salix* spp, opposite-leaved golden saxifrage *Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*, reedmace *Typha latifolia*, bird's-foot trefoil *Lotus corniculatus*, prickly sow-thistle *Sonchus asper*, field horsetail *Equestum arvense*, creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens*, soft rush *Juncus effusus*, hard rush *Juncus inflexus*, common ragwort *Senecio jacobaea*, great willowherb *Epilobium hirsutum*, water mint *Mentha aquatica*, lesser pondweed *Carex acutiformis*, nettle *Urtica dioica*, red campion *Silene dioica*, cocksfoot *Dactylis glomerata*, silverweed *Potentilla anserina*, bramble *Rubus fruticosus*, hogweed *Heracleum sphondylium*, oak *Quercus robur*, elder *Sambucus nigra*, blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*, alder *Alnus glutinosa*, curled dock *Rumex crispus*, field bindweed *Convolvulus arvensis*

Avifauna:

It was too late in the season for a breeding bird survey. The mature trees, scrub and tall marshy vegetation provide excellent habitat for resident and migrant species. Species recorded during the survey: blackbird *Turdus merula*, robin *Erithacus rubecula*, blue tit *Parus caeruleus*, crow *Corvus corone corone*, wood pigeon *Columba palumbus*, wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*

Invertebrate:

The site provides excellent habitat for *Lepidoptera*, *Odonata*, *Coleoptera* and *Orthoptera*. Weather conditions were unsuitable for these groups on the day of the survey.

Herpetofauna:

The site provides potential habitat for slow worm and grass snake.

Mammals:

Rabbit *Oryctolagus cuniculus*, fox *Vulpes vulpes*

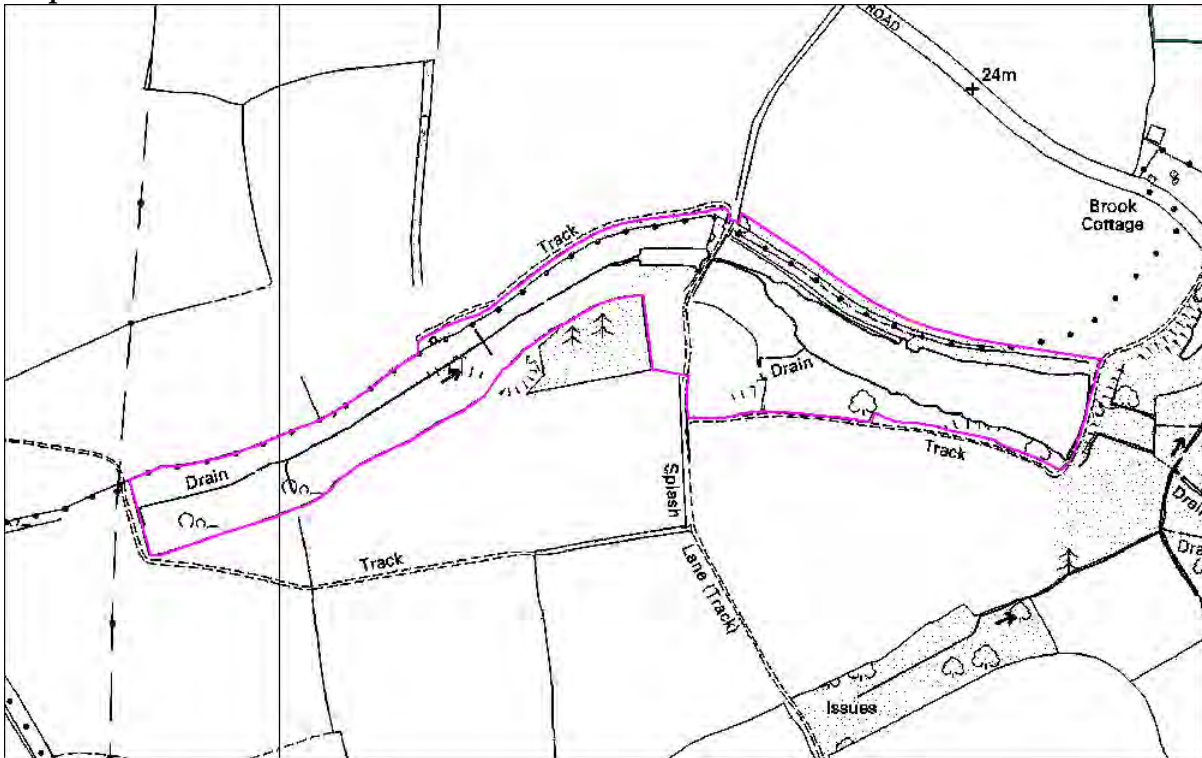
Comments & Recommendations

The meadows around the reservoir have been recently cut and the cuttings have not been removed. It would be beneficial to the overall floristic diversity of the grassland if the cuttings were removed in future. There has been some tree removal within the wood creating open areas which has allowed the ground flora to flourish. There is a barn owl box attached to an oak tree on the northern edge of the woodland. Further botanical survey is recommended to assess the diversity of the meadow and the woodland spring and early summer flora.

Kirton Reservoir

Site status: County Wildlife Site
Grid reference: TM 266405
Location: Kirton
Area: 8 ha
Date: 18/08/09
Recorder: P Hemphill
Weather conditions: Hot, sunny with southerly breeze
Ranking: 2
Conservation value: High

Map



Crown

Copyright Licence Number 10016410

Photographs



Reservoir used as a fishing lake



Long meadow would benefit from cattle grazing

Habitat types

Broadleaf woodland, wet meadow and open water.

Subsidiary habitats

Standing dead wood and a ditch.

Site description.

This site consists of a mosaic of habitat types including open water, broadleaf woodland and wet meadow. Long Meadow located to the west of Kirton Reservoir, and the marshy ground below the reservoir support a range of wetland plants although bracken is beginning to encroach onto both areas from the southern boundary. The mature broadleaved woodland is dominated by mature oaks and ash with silver birch, crack willow, hazel and there are a number of standing dead trees throughout. The woodland understorey is dominated by bracken, nettles, bramble and great willowherb. The reservoir is a large area of open water with a fringe of reedmace, branched bur-reed and rush around the perimeter. There are regular platforms for fishing.

Protected species

Otter *Lutra lutra* and water vole *Arvicola terrestris* were recorded.

Protected species potential

Bats – excellent potential roosting and feeding areas. Barn owl *Tyto alba*, Grass snake *Natrix natrix* and slow worm *Anguis fragilis*

BAP habitats present

Eutrophic pond

BAP species seen

-

BAP species known

Otter and water vole.

BAP species potential

Bats, barn owl, grass snake, toad *Bufo bufo*, slow worm, reed warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*, reed bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*.

Connectivity

The site is surrounded by arable land with hedges and ditches leading down to the reservoir site which provides good connectivity to the surrounding land.

Structural diversity

Excellent – the combination of woodland, open water, ditch and grassland provides good habitat for a number of taxonomic groups.

Flora

The site does not appear to have changed apart from some bracken *Pteridium aquilinum* encroachment in the grassland areas. These areas also support Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus*, false oat grass *Arrhenatherum elatius*, curled dock *Rumex crispus*, rosebay willowherb *Chamerion angustifolium* with occasional gypsywort *Lycopus europaeus* and reedmace *Typha latifolia* with dense stands of common bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus corniculatus* and field horsetail *Equisetum arvense*.

The reservoir has occasional patches of white water lilies *Nymphaea alba* but is otherwise clear of submerged aquatic flora. The banks are fringed by reedmace, branched bur-reed *Sparganium erectum* and rush species *Juncus spp.*

Avifauna

It is too late in the season for a breeding bird survey, but the site is likely to be good for a range of resident, migrant and over-wintering birds.

Invertebrates

Lepidoptera included large white *Pieris brassicae*, common blue *Polyommatus icarus*, meadow brown *Maniola jurtina*, painted lady *Cynthia cardui* and speckled wood *Pararge aegeria*. *Odonata* included blue damselflies and large blue dragonflies. *Orthoptera* were heard in the grassland but not seen.

Herpetofauna

The grassland and reservoir surrounds are suitable habitat for grass snake and slow worm.

Mammals

Otter spraint was recorded. This is excellent otter habitat with abundant surrounding cover providing potential holt sites. Water vole were also recorded the reservoir provides good habitat with cover from predators, and an abundant food resource. Rabbit *Oryctolagus cuniculus* and fox *Vulpes vulpes*

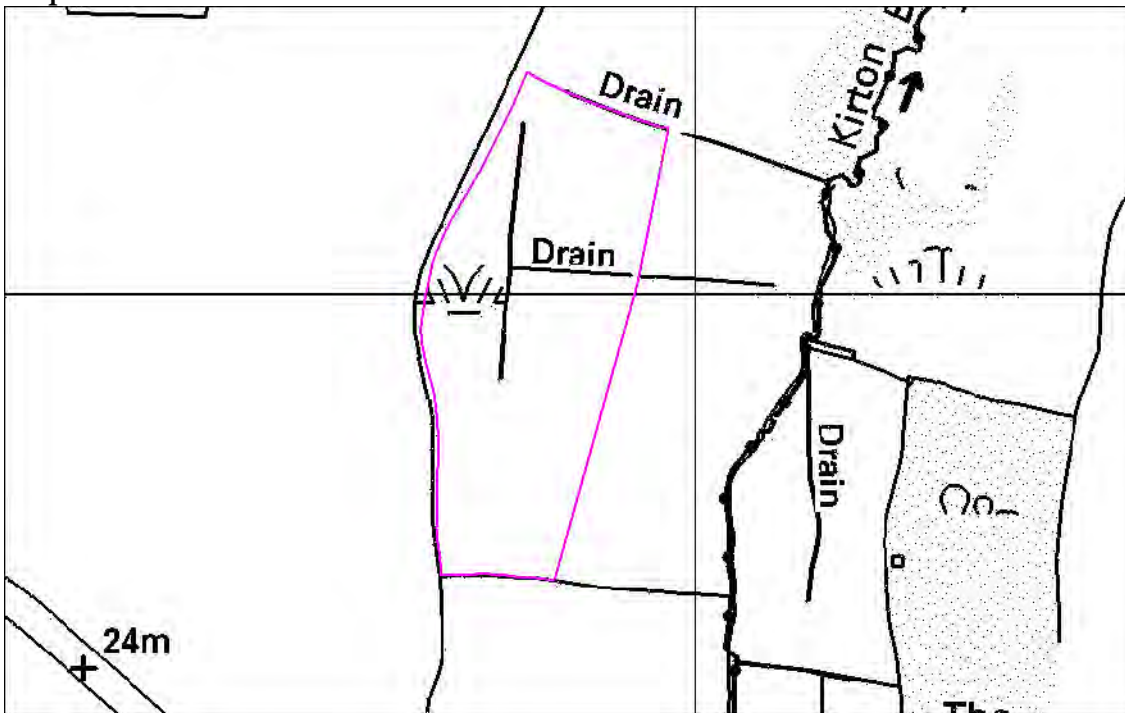
Comments and recommendations

This mosaic of habitats provides opportunities for a number of taxonomic groups. The reservoir is managed for fishing by a local angling club and the pathways around the reservoir, including the public footpath are kept open and clear of vegetation. The grassland areas are not managed. It is recommended that Long Meadow is grazed by cattle.

Paul's Rough Ground

Site Status: County Wildlife Site
Grid Ref: TM 269410
Location: Kirton
Area: 2.3 ha
Date: 03/09/2009
Recorder: Penny Hemphill
Weather conditions: Cloud cover, strong wind
Ranking: 2 as a CWS but needs reviewing
Conservation Value: High conservation value

Map



Crown Copyright Licence Number 10016410

Photographs



Overgrazed meadows showing abundance of creeping thistle



Ditch habitat, overgrazed and poached by cattle

Habitat Types:

Lowland meadow

Subsidiary Habitats:

Scrub, ditches, lying dead wood

Site Description:

Unimproved meadows drained by ditches and bounded by broadleaf trees, Kirton Brook and arable land. Bracken, bramble and gorse are encroaching along the western boundary. There are wet areas where rush species dominate the vegetation, and creeping thistle is abundant throughout the site. The site supports a range of marshland plants including greater bird's-foot trefoil, ragged robin and fleabane. The meadow is currently being intensively grazed by cattle.

Protected Species:

Otter *Lutra lutra* along Kirton Brook.

Protected Species Potential

Barn owl *Tyto alba*, bats, grass snake *Natrix natrix*.

BAP Habitats Present

Lowland meadow

BAP Species Seen

-

BAP Species known

Otter

BAP Species Potential

Bats, barn owl

Connectivity

The site is adjacent to Kirton Brook which flows into the Mill River an excellent natural wildlife corridor.

Structural Diversity

Good structural diversity with mature trees, scrub, grassland, river and ditch habitat.

Flora:

Overgrazing by cattle put constraints on the botanical assessment of this site. The following species were recorded: nettle *Urtica dioica*, gorse *Ulex europaeus*, bracken *Pteridium aquilinum*, alder *Alnus glutinosa*, oak *Quercus robur*, ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, hazel *Corylus avellana*, elder *Sambucus nigra*, spear thistle *Cirsium vulgare*, creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense*, marsh thistle *Cirsium palustre*, great willowherb *Epilobium hirsutum*, Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus*, creeping bent *Agrostis stolonifera*, cocksfoot *Dactylis glomerata*, bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus corniculatus*, creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens*, soft rush *Juncus effusus*, common fleabane *Pulicaria sysenterica*, water mint *Mentha aquatica*, curled dock *Rumex crispus*, red clover *Trifolium pratense*, white clover *Trifolium repens*, brooklime *Veronica beccabunga*, water-cress *Nasturtium officinale*, fool's water-cress *Apium nodiflorum*, duckweed *Lemna* spp and redshank *Polygonum persicaria*.

Avifauna:

It was too late in the season for a breeding bird survey. The scrub and mature trees provide potential breeding habitat for resident and migrant species.

Invertebrate:

Strong winds on the day of survey made conditions unsuitable for invertebrates. The site provides good habitat for a variety of invertebrate groups.

Herpetofauna:

The site provides potential habitat for grass snake.

Mammals:

Rabbit *Oryctolagus cuniculus*

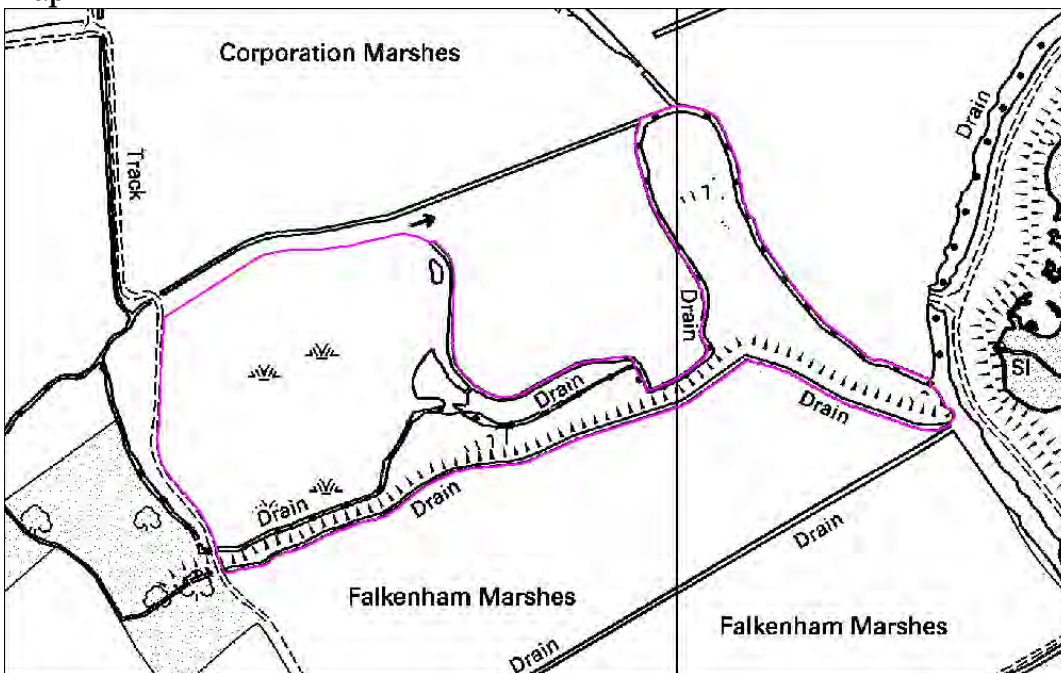
Comments & Recommendations

The site is owned and managed by Paul's Estate. Intensive cattle grazing has reduced the sward to nothing with abundant creeping thistle in evidence. The ditches are severely poached and the bankside vegetation overgrazed – ditch restoration would enhance this habitat for water vole. A review of the grazing regime is advised to restore the botanical value of the site.

Corporation Marsh

Site Status: County Wildlife Site
Grid Ref: TM 300405
Location: Falkenham marshes
Area: 8.4 ha
Date: 18/08/2009
Recorder: Penny Hemphill
Weather conditions: Sunny, hot, strong breeze
Ranking: 2
Conservation Value: High conservation value

Map



Crown Copyright Licence Number 10016410

Photograph



View of Corporation Marsh from Falkenham Creek

Habitat Types:

Reedbed and scrub.

Subsidiary Habitats:

Ditch and grass bund

Site Description:

This area of land is situated close to Falkenham Creek and consists of a reedbed interspersed with clumps of scrub. It is drained by a dyke which flows through the area and into Falkenham Creek on the eastern side. There is a raised and well managed grassy bund which is located through the middle of the site. The mosaic of habitat types provides potential hunting ground for raptors including hen harrier and marsh harrier. The reedbed provides breeding areas for sedge and reed warbler and reed bunting, and the scrub would attract breeding whitethroat and wren.

Protected Species:

Water vole *Arvicola terrestris* – evidence of water vole activity was recorded during the survey.

Protected Species Potential

Otter *Lutra lutra* may use the ditch as a route through the marshes, and the scrub and reedbed provide excellent resting sites. The grassy bund provides potential habitat for common lizard *Lacerta vivipara* and grass snake *Natrix natrix*.

BAP Habitats Present

Reedbed

BAP Species Seen

-

BAP Species known

Water vole

BAP Species Potential

Reed warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*, reed bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*, otter, grass snake and common lizard

Connectivity

This is an important area of undisturbed habitat within this former grazing marsh which is now intensively farmed arable land. It provides excellent connectivity to and from the Deben estuary and Falkenham Creek via the ditch network which extends throughout these marshes.

Structural Diversity

Good structural diversity with scrub, reedbed and ditch habitat.

Flora:

Common reed *Phragmites australis* dominates the reedbed habitat, and hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, blackthorn *Prunus spinosa* and bramble *Rubus fruticosus* make up the scrub habitat. There are few associate species which include great willowherb *Epilobium hirsutum*, water mint *Mentha aquatica*, water dock *Rumex hydrolopathum*, bittersweet *Solanum dulcamara* and hemp agrimony *Eupatorium cannabinum*.

Avifauna:

It was too late in the season for a breeding bird survey. Mute swans *Cygnus olor* were recorded in the open ditch.

Invertebrate:

None recorded, however the site offers excellent opportunities for *Odonata* and *Lepidoptera*.

Herpetofauna:

None seen but potential habitat for common lizard and grass snake.

Mammals:

Rabbit *Oryctolagus cuniculus*. The site provides potential habitat for small mammals particularly field vole *Microtus agrestis*.

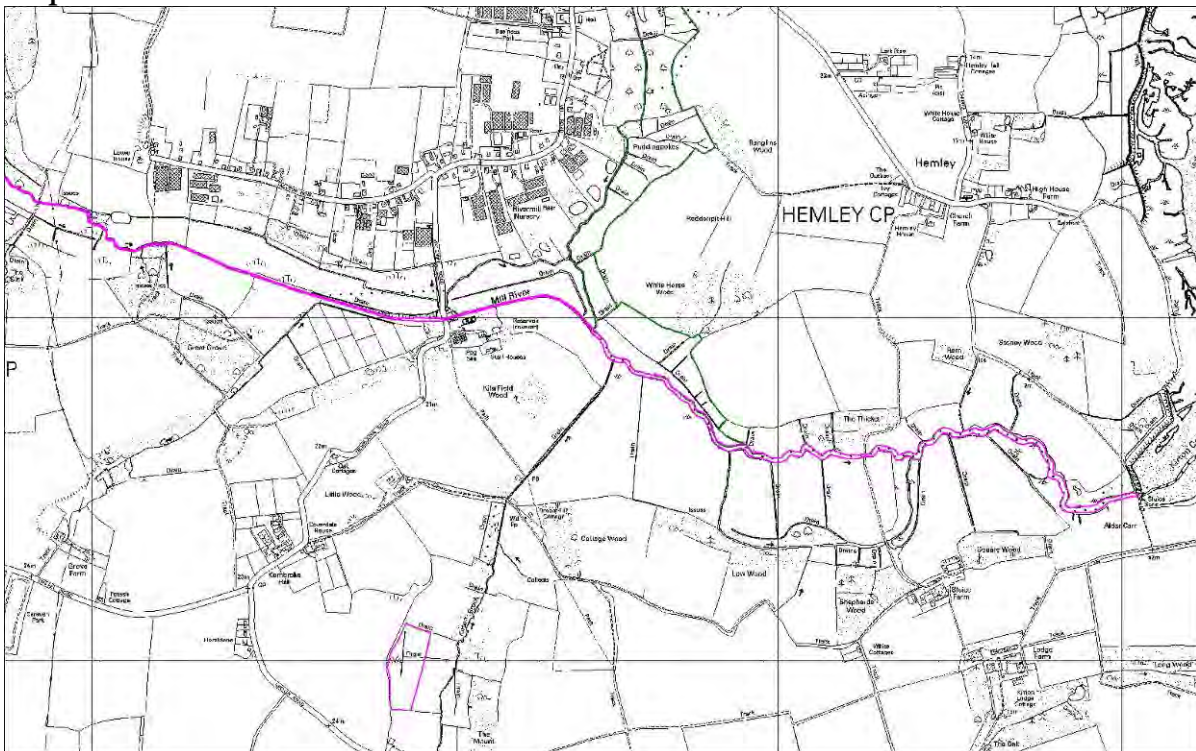
Comments & Recommendations

The site is owned and managed by Paul's Estate. The current management regime is maintaining the biodiversity value of this site which is an important area of reedbed within the wider intensively farmed arable land.

Mill River

Site Status: County Wildlife Site
Grid Ref: TM 219433
Area: 5.5 ha
Date: 03/09/2009
Recorder: Penny Hemphill
Weather conditions: Cloud cover, strong wind
Ranking: 2
Conservation Value: High conservation value

Map



Crown Copyright Licence Number 10016410

Photographs



Upstream end adjacent to the Mount CWS



River dominated by common reed on Pauls Estate



Eastern end of the river immediately upstream of Kirton Creek

Habitat Types:

Lowland river

Subsidiary Habitats:

Connecting ditches, bankside trees, scrub, wet woodland and reedbed

Site Description:

The Mill River rises on the outskirts of Ipswich and flows into the River Deben estuary at Kirton creek. The watercourse flows through a diverse landscape ranging from alder carr, grazing meadows, improved pasture, plantation woodland, marsh and reedbed. Springs feed the Mill from both sides as it meanders through the woodland at the upstream end, and the marshy conditions of the woodland floor support a wide variety of mosses, liverworts and ferns. Opposite- leaved golden saxifrage, dominates the ground flora in the upstream areas. A number of other areas which border the Mill River have also been identified as County Wildlife Sites. These are The Mount, Brightwell Grazing Meadows and Valley Farm Meadow. The river banks slope down gently along most of its length and the marshy edge is colonised by a colourful array of waterside plants including purple loosestrife, yellow iris and hemp agrimony and there are abundant dragonflies in these areas. However, common reed now dominates the channel for much of the length of the river through Paul's Estate which has reduced the botanical diversity of the aquatic flora and reduced the area of open water. The reed-fringed section of the Mill just upstream from Kirton Creek is a prime habitat for birds.

Protected Species:

Otter *Lutra lutra* and water vole *Arvicola terrestris* – evidence of both these species was recorded during the survey along the river.

Protected Species Potential

Barn owl *Tyto alba*, bats, grass snake *Natrix natrix*, water shrew *Neomys fodiens*

BAP Habitats Present

Small areas of reedbed occur at various points along the river particularly towards the eastern end.

BAP Species Seen

-

BAP Species known

Otter and water vole.

BAP Species Potential

Bats, grass snake, barn owl, reed warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*, reed bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*,

Connectivity

The river is a natural wildlife corridor which links to adjacent woodland, reedbeds, grassland, hedges and ditches creating natural corridors into the surrounding countryside.

Structural Diversity

Excellent structural diversity with mature bankside trees, tall emergent and bankside vegetation, reedbed and river.

Flora:

Common reed *Phragmites australis* fringes the river on both banks and dominates the channel for long stretches at the downstream end. Frequent associate species include duckweed *Lemna* spp, meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria*, nettle *Urtica dioica*, great willowherb *Epilobium hirsutum*, hemp agrimony *Eupatorium cannabinum*. lesser pond sedge *Carex acutiformis*, branched bur-reed *Sparganium erectum*, creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens*, soft rush *Juncus effusus*, water mint *Mentha aquatica*, tussock sedge *Carex paniculata*, reed canary grass *Phalaris arundinacea*, gipsywort *Lycopus europaeus*, hard rush *Juncus inflexus*, redshank *Polygonum persicaria*. At the upstream end of the river there are frequent bryophytes and liverworts and opposite-leaved golden-saxifrage *Chryso-splenium oppositifolium*.

Avifauna:

It was too late in the season for a breeding bird survey however the reed dominated eastern end of the river is excellent habitat for a number of bird species including reed warbler and sedge warbler. Where the river meets Kirton Creek, waders and ducks would be recorded.

Invertebrate:

High winds on the day of survey made conditions unsuitable for *Lepidoptera* and *Odonata* and none were recorded. However, the Mill River would provide excellent habitat for these groups. *Orthoptera* were heard in the adjacent meadows but not seen.

Herpetofauna:

The river provides potential habitat for reptiles and amphibians.

Mammals:

Rabbit *Oryctolagus cuniculus*, hare *Lepus capensis*

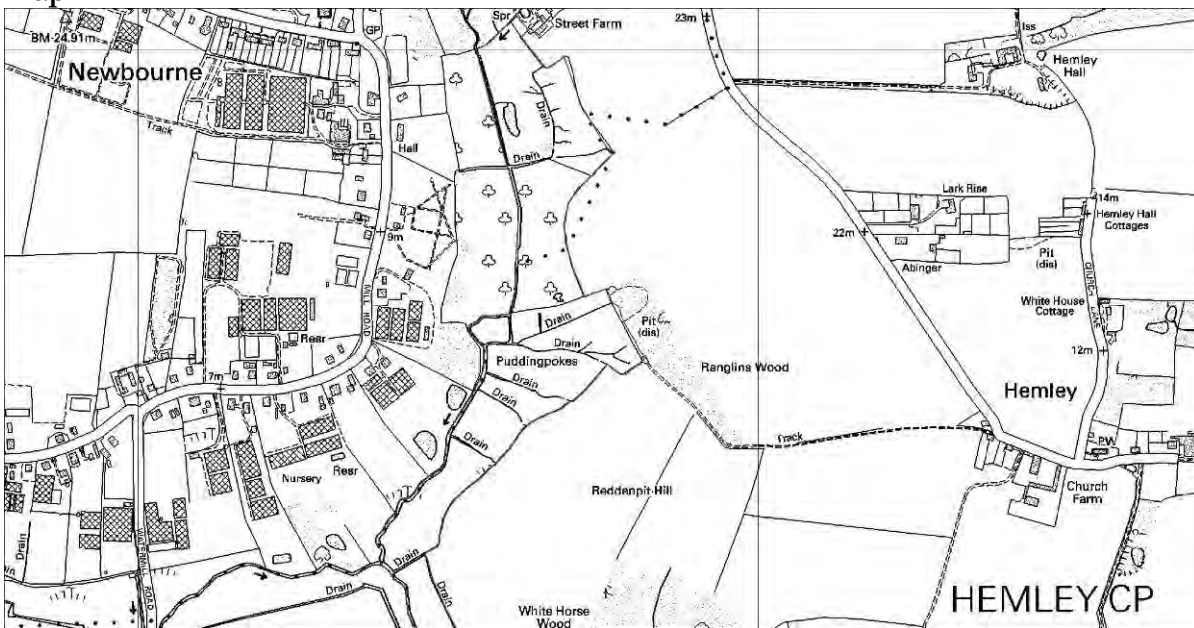
Comments & Recommendations

Floristic diversity along the Mill River has been reduced along the eastern half by the common reed which has out-competed many species previously recorded. Time constraints for this survey made it impossible to walk the entire length of the river. Paul's Estate are concerned at the impact the reed is having on the river and its carrying capacity.

Newbourne Spring Meadows

Site Status: County Wildlife Site
Grid Ref: TM 276425
Location: Newbourne
Area: 17.4 ha
Date: 03/09/2009
Recorder: Penny Hemphill
Weather conditions: Cloud cover, strong wind
Ranking: 2
Conservation Value: High conservation value

Map



Crown Copyright Licence Number 10016410

Photos



Cattle grazed species rich meadows



Plantation woodland

Habitat Types:

Unimproved meadow, river, broadleaf plantation woodland

Subsidiary Habitats:

Ditches, standing dead wood

Site Description:

A series of unimproved wet meadows with an area of plantation woodland located adjacent to the east bank of Newbourne Springs, downstream of Street Farm. Broadleaf trees and hedges surround the meadows and there are a number of mature oaks within the meadows, including standing dead wood. Alders line the ditches and river in places and there are a number of mature crack willows towards the southern end of the site. The southern meadows are cattle grazed and are dominated by large stands of lesser pond sedge, slender sedge, meadowsweet and creeping buttercup. The ditches are heavily poached by stock and are overgrown with sedge and branched bur-reed. The river is fringed with common reed on both banks providing potentially good water vole habitat. The northern meadow appears unmanaged and supports grassland dominated by cocksfoot, curled dock, tall fescue, false oat grass, great willowherb.

Protected Species:

Otter *Lutra lutra* and water vole *Arvicola terrestris* – evidence of both these species was recorded during the survey along the river. Badger *Meles meles*.

Protected Species Potential

Barn owl *Tyto alba*, bats, grass snake *Natrix natrix*

BAP Habitats Present

Lowland meadow

BAP Species Seen

-

BAP Species known

Otter and water vole.

BAP Species Potential

Bats, grass snake, reed warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*, reed bunting *Emberiza schoeniclus*

Connectivity

The stream, which flows adjacent to the site joins the Mill River which is part of the Deben river catchment which is an excellent natural wildlife corridor. Woodland and hedges surrounding the site also improve connectivity to surrounding arable land.

Structural Diversity

Good structural diversity with mature trees, tall herb vegetation, hedges, grassland, river and ditch habitat.

Flora:

The timing of this survey put constraints on the botanical assessment of this site with regard to spring species. Common reed *Phragmites australis* fringes the river on both banks. The plantation woodland is dominated by willow *Salix* spp with an understory dominated by common reed with meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria*, angelica *Angelica sylvestris*, nettle *Urtica dioica*, great willowherb *Epilobium hirsutum* and hemp agrimony *Eupatorium cannabinum*. The meadows are

dominated by grass species including Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus*, creeping bent *Agrostis stolonifera*, cocksfoot *Dactylis glomerata* with large stand of lesser pond sedge *Carex acutiformis*, branched bur-reed *Sparganium erectu* and slender sedge *Carex lasiocarpa*. Associate species include bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus corniculatus*, creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens*, soft rush *Juncus effuses*, marsh thistle *Cirsium palustre*, blunt-flowered rush *Juncus subnodulosus*, common fleabane *Pulicaria sysenterica*, water mint *Mentha aquatica*, common knapweed *Centaurea nigra*, silverweed *Potentilla anserina*, creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense*, curled dock *Rumex crispus*, hogweed *Heracleum sphondylium*, and red clover *Trifolium pratense*. Floating sweet-grass *Glyceria fluitans* occurs in the ditches.

Avifauna:

It was too late in the season for a breeding bird survey however the reed fringed stream is good habitat for reed warbler and sedge warbler. Swallow *Hirundo rustica*, wood pigeon *Columba oenas* and blue tit *Parus caeruleus* were recorded.

Invertebrate:

Lepidoptera: painted lady *Cynthia cardui* and speckled wood *Pararge aegeria*. The site is potentially good habitat for *Odonata* however none were recorded. *Orthoptera* were heard in the grassland.

Herpetofauna:

The site provides potential habitat for grass snake.

Mammals:

Rabbit *Oryctolagus cuniculus*

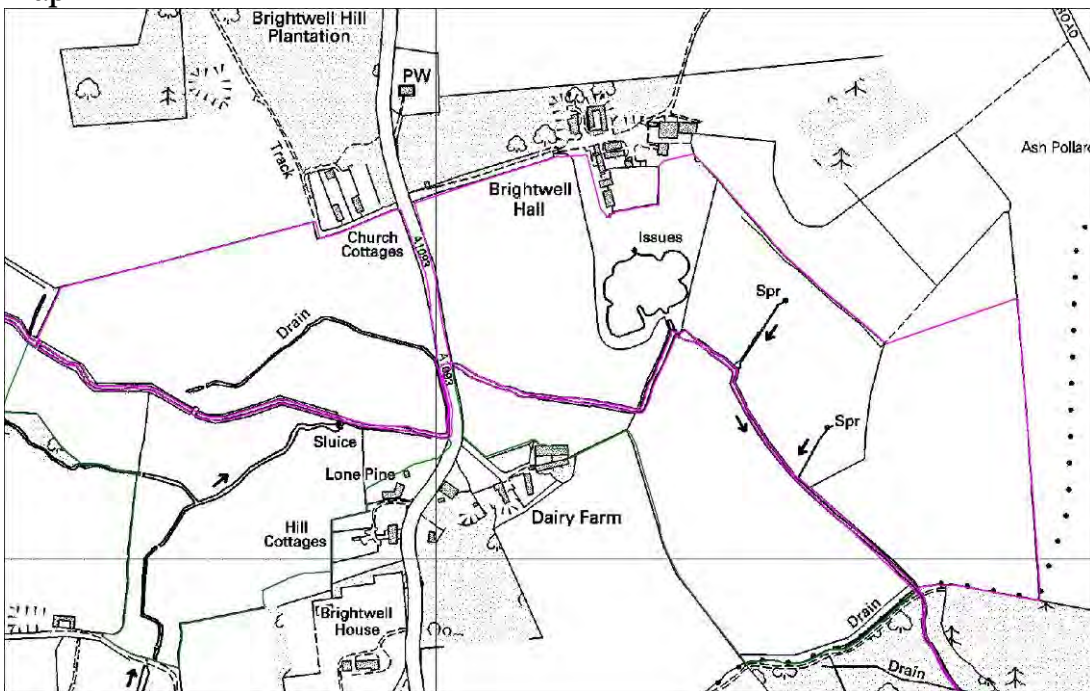
Comments & Recommendations

The site is owned and managed by Paul's Estate. The southern meadows are lightly grazed by cattle which appears to be maintaining the botanical diversity of the site. The northern meadow adjacent to the plantation woodland had not been cut (early September). The ditches would benefit from some restoration work, which would enhance them for water vole. The standing dead oak tree should be left intact, it is important habitat for invertebrates and woodpeckers.

Brightwell Grazing Meadows

Site Status: County Wildlife Site
Grid Ref: TM 251431
Location: Brightwell
Area: 38.5 ha
Date: 22/09/2009
Recorder: Penny Hemphill
Weather conditions: Clear, sunny, still
Ranking: 2
Conservation Value: High conservation value

Map



Crown Copyright Licence Number 10016410

Photographs



Grass dominated sward throughout the meadows



Mill River with abundant aquatic flora



Newly created lake with fringe of reedmace around the perimeter

Habitat Types:

Unimproved grassland, river, lake

Subsidiary Habitats:

Foot drains, standing dead wood, broadleaf hedge,

Site Description:

A series of cattle grazed meadows adjoin both sides of the River Mill providing a valuable habitat for plants and animals. The river is lined with alder on the southern bank and has a rich aquatic flora with banks supporting emergent vegetation providing excellent habitat for water vole and water shrew. Downstream of the bridge, the meadows are spring fed and the high water table throughout the summer provides ideal conditions for a wide range of wetland species however due to the time of year of this survey, some previously recorded species such as southern marsh orchid, meadow saxifrage, ragged robin and distant sedge were not found. The newly created lake is fringed with reedmace and provides valuable habitat for a variety of invertebrates as well as birds and amphibians.

Protected Species:

Otter *Lutra lutra* and water vole *Arvicola terrestris* – evidence of both these species was recorded during the survey along the river. Barn owl *Tyto alba*.

Protected Species Potential

Grass snake *Natrix natrix*, water shrew *Neomys fodiens*

BAP Habitats Present

Lowland meadow

BAP Species Seen

-

BAP Species known

Otter and water vole.

BAP Species Potential

Bats, grass snake, water shrew *Neomys anomalus*

Connectivity

Excellent connectivity along the Mill River valley with water meadows, hedges and ditches connecting to the adjacent arable land.

Structural Diversity

Good structural diversity with mature trees, hedges, grassland, river and ditch habitat.

Flora:

The meadows are dominated by a dense grass sward with species including Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus*, creeping bent *Agrostis stolonifera*, cocksfoot *Dactylis glomerata*, false oat grass *Arrhenatherum elatius* and smooth meadow grass *Poa pratensis*, with occasional creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense*, dandelion *Taraxacum* spp, creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens*, ribwort plantain *Plantago lanceolata*, nettle *Urtica dioica*, common mallow *Malva sylvestris*, common fleabane *Pulicaria dysenterica*, bird's-foot trefoil *Lotus corniculatus*, ragwort *Senecio jacobaea*, field horsetail *Equisetum arvense* and redshank *Polygonum persicaria* in the sward. The hedges and trees include alder *Alnus glutinosa*, hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, bramble *Rubus fruticosus*, dog rose *Rosa canina*, elm *Ulmus procera*, ivy *Hedera helix*, hazel *Corylus avellana* and oak *Quercus robur*. Aquatic flora around the fringes of the lake and along the river include hard rush *Juncus inflexus*, meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria*, great willowherb *Epilobium hirsutum*, water dock *Rumex hydrolapathum* branched bur-reed *Sparganium erectum*, Iris *Iris pseudacorus*, water mint *Mentha aquatica*, brooklime *Veronica beccabunga*, water forget-me-not *Myosotis scorpioides*, lesser water parsnip *Berula erecta*, purple loosestrife *Lythrum salicaria* and reedmace *Typha latifolia*.

Avifauna:

It was too late in the season for a breeding bird survey however surrounding hedges and scrub provide good habitat for birds. Goldfinch *Carduelis carduelis*, moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*, wood pigeon *Columba oenas*, mallard *Anas platyrhynchos* and crow *Corvus corone corone* were recorded.

Invertebrate:

The site, particularly the river the lake provide excellent habitat for *Lepidoptera* and *Odonata* species however none were recorded. *Orthoptera* were heard in the grassland but not seen.

Herpetofauna:

The site provides potential habitat for grass snake *Natrix natrix*.

Mammals:

Rabbit *Oryctolagus cuniculus*

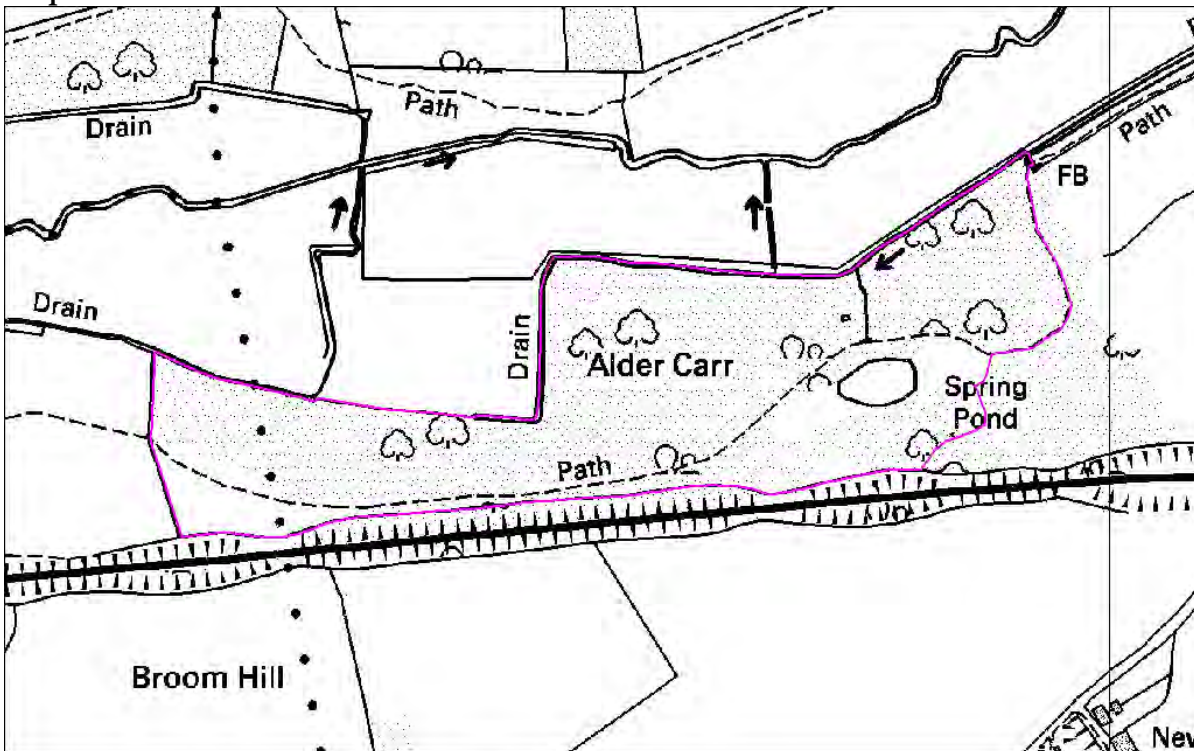
Comments & Recommendations

The meadows are grazed by cattle and have been recently topped giving a uniform appearance. The sward was difficult to assess due to the time of year, however it appears to be dominated by grasses with few associate species of interest. Further survey in the spring is required to assess the spring and early summer flora. The banks of the Mill River have been poached by cattle and a few alders have been cut down on the northern bank. The meadows on the western side of the road were observed from the public footpath as it was not possible to gain landowner permission to survey the whole site. It is an ideal site for a barn owl box.

Playford Alder Carr

Site Status: County Wildlife Site
Grid Ref: TM 207474
Location: Playford
Area: 6.8 ha
Date: 28/09/2009
Recorder: Penny Hemphill
Weather conditions: Sunny, clear and warm
Ranking: 2
Conservation Value: High conservation value

Map



Crown Copyright Licence Number 10016410

Photographs



Stream from pond flowing towards River Fynn



Pond dominated by common reed



Mature trees with young sycamore

Habitat Types:

Ancient deciduous woodland, pond, stream

Subsidiary Habitats:

Lying and standing dead wood, wet flushes

Site Description:

This is a deciduous woodland in the Fynn valley consisting of mature alder, ash, oak, hornbeam and sycamore with wet areas of sedges and reeds. There are a number of young sycamore and the ground flora is dominated by herb robert, red campion and bramble. An area planted with hybrid poplars is also included within the site boundary as it contains standing water fed by springs and also the occasional oak and alder. Spring pond is dominated by emergent vegetation and has little open water and a stream leads down from the pond towards the River Fynn. There are areas where the ground is water-logged where the wet flushes occur and in these areas opposite-leaved golden saxifrage dominates the ground flora. Previous descriptions of this site state that 'the flora includes bluebells on the slope rising to the railway line and some plants normally indicative of ancient woodland for example wood melick, sanicle and moschatel. Wetland species occur in the boggy flushes; marsh marigold, hemp agrimony, yellow flag and common valerian'. A well used public footpath from Tuddenham to Playford runs through the wood.

Protected Species:

Badger *Meles meles*

Protected Species Potential

Water vole *Arvicola terrestris*, bats, otter *Lutra lutra*

BAP Habitats Present

Lowland mixed deciduous woodland, wet woodland

BAP Species Seen

-

BAP Species known

-

BAP Species Potential

Bats, badger, stag beetle, water vole, otter.

Connectivity

Good. The woodland is located in the Fynn river valley to the north of the railway line and provides a link to surrounding arable land via hedges and ditches.

Structural Diversity

Good structural diversity with a dense canopy of mature trees, scrub and an understorey of ivy and flowering species.

Flora:

The timing of this survey put constraints on the botanical assessment of this site with regard to spring flowering plants. The following species were recorded: nettle *Urtica dioica*, , oak *Quercus robur*, ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, hazel *Corylus avellana*, elder *Sambucus nigra*, spear thistle *Cirsium vulgare*, bramble *Rubus fruticosus*, creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense*, sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus*, holly *Ilex aquifolium*, hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, ivy *Hedera helix*, ground ivy *Glechoma hederacea*, elm *Ulmus procera*, hornbeam *Carpinus betulus*, blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*, alder *Alnus glutinosa*, herb robert *Geranium robertianum*, hybrid poplar *Populus* spp, brack *Pteridium aquilinum*, male fern *Dryopteris filix-mas*, opposite-leaved golden saxifrage *Chrysosplenium oppositifolium*, lesser pond sedge *Carex acutiformis*, common reed *Phragmites australis*, red campion *Silene dioica*, and cocksfoot *Dactylis glomerata*.

Avifauna:

It was too late in the season for a breeding bird survey. The woodland provides potential breeding habitat for resident and migrant species.

Invertebrate:

The site provides good habitat for a variety of invertebrate groups including *Coleoptera*, *Odonata* on the pond and stream and *Lepidoptera* along the woodland paths.

Herpetofauna:

-

Mammals:

Rabbit *Oryctolagus cuniculus*, fox *Vulpes vulpes*, grey squirrel *Sciurus carolinensis*.

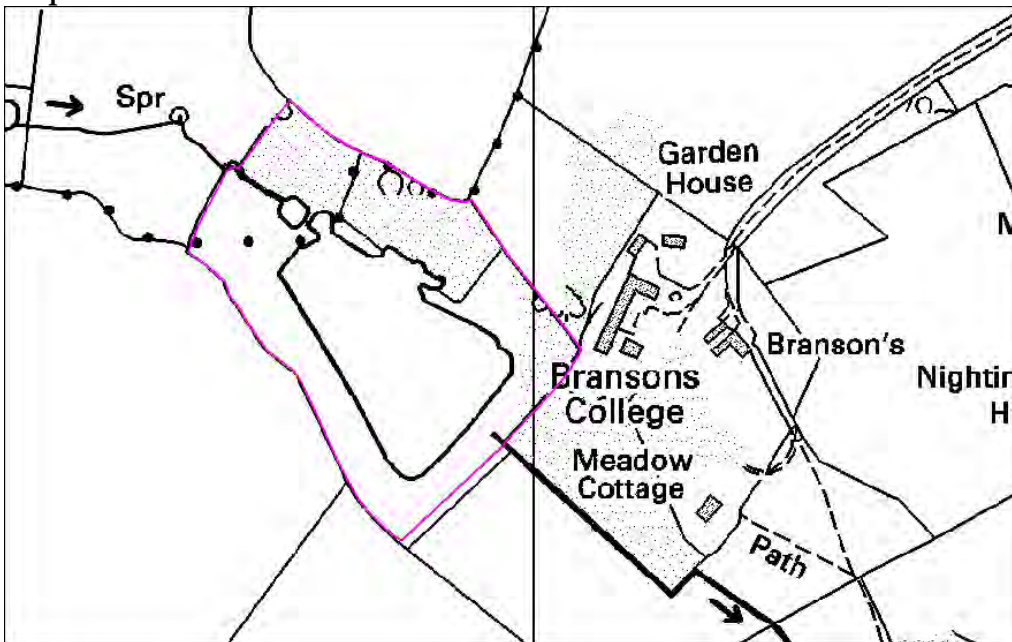
Comments & Recommendations

There is a regularly used footpath through this very attractive woodland. There has been no obvious management undertaken and in places the footpath is partially blocked by fallen trees. Otter may use the stream to access the wood looking for potential holts and resting up sites. Further survey to assess the spring flora of this wood is recommended.

Playford Reservoir

Site Status: County Wildlife Site
Grid Ref: TM 208487
Area: 8.3 ha
Location: Playford
Date: 30/09/2009
Recorder: Penny Hemphill
Weather conditions: Cloud with sunny intervals, warm
Ranking: 2
Conservation Value: High conservation value

Map



Crown Copyright Licence Number 10016410

Photographs



Playford reservoir with fringe of emergent vegetation

Habitat Types:

Open water, rough grassland

Subsidiary Habitats:

Scrub, standing dead wood, ditch, mature trees

Site Description:

Playford Reservoir is an area of open water surrounded by arable fields, north of the village of Playford. The reservoir is fringed with dense reed, pond sedge, rushes and hairy willowherb and there are areas of bramble scrub on the banks. It is surrounded by some rough grassland and a number of mature trees. The habitats are valuable for a number of breeding bird species, for example sedge warbler, reed warbler, wren, whitethroat and reed bunting. The open water of the reservoir itself is frequented by a number of water birds; coot, moorhen, and mallard and in winter provides sheltered conditions for significant numbers of wildfowl. Previous records indicate that the site is important for breeding amphibians.

Protected Species:

Barn owl *Tyto alba*

Protected Species Potential

Otter *Lutra lutra*, water vole *Arvicola terrestris*, water shrew *Neomys fodiens*, grass snake *Natrix natrix*, bats

BAP Habitats Present

Eutrophic pond

BAP Species Seen

Toad *Bufo bufo*

BAP Species known

BAP Species Potential

Otter, water vole, barn owl, water shrew, bats, reed warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*, sedge warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*

Connectivity

The site is on the edge of the Fynn river valley and a ditch leads down from the reservoir to the River Fynn which provides an excellent wildlife corridor especially for otter and water vole. There are a number of hedges and ditches linking the surrounding arable land to the reservoir creating good wildlife corridors throughout the area.

Structural Diversity

Excellent structural diversity with mature trees, scrub, tall fen vegetation and rough grassland creating opportunities for a number of taxonomic groups.

Flora:

Species recorded include: Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus*, false oat grass *Arrhenatherum elatius*, creeping bent *Agrostis stolonifera*, creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense*, ground ivy *Glechoma hederacea*, willow *Salix* spp, reedmace *Typha latifolia*, common reed *Phragmites australis*, creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens*, soft rush *Juncus effusus*, hard rush *Juncus inflexus*, common ragwort *Senecio*

jacobaea, great willowherb *Epilobium hirsutum*, water mint *Mentha aquatica*, nettle *Urtica dioica*, cocksfoot *Dactylis glomerata*, bramble *Rubus fruticosus*, oak *Quercus robur*, elder *Sambucus nigra*, blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*, curled dock *Rumex crispus*, alder *Alnus glutinosa*, bracken *Pteridium aquilinum*, lesser pond sedge *Carex acutiformis*, bramble *Rubus fruticosus* gorse *Ulex europaeus*, English elm *Ulmus procera*

Avifauna:

It was too late in the season for a breeding bird survey however the mature trees, scrub and tall marshy vegetation provide excellent habitat for resident and migrant species. Species recorded during the survey include blackbird *Turdus merula*, blue tit *Parus caeruleus*, crow *Corvus corone corone*, wood pigeon *Columba palumbus*, wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*, moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*, mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*, coot *Fulica atra*, pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*.

Invertebrate:

The site provides excellent habitat for the groups *Lepidoptera*, *Odonata* and *Orthoptera*. Weather conditions were unsuitable for these groups on the day of the survey

Herpetofauna:

The site provides potential habitat for reptiles and amphibians.

Mammals:

Rabbit *Oryctolagus cuniculus*, fox *Vulpes vulpes*, field vole *Microtus agrestis*

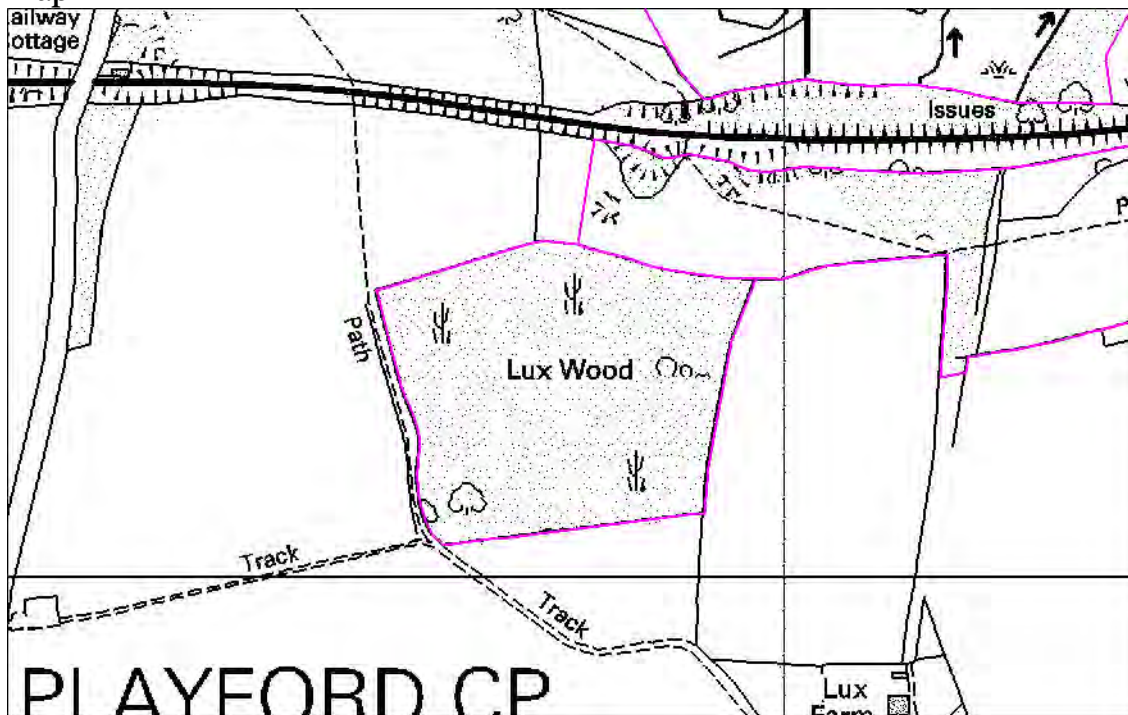
Comments & Recommendations

The grassland areas had recently been cut – creeping thistle dominates the grass sward.

Lux Wood

Site Status: County Wildlife Site
Grid Ref: TM 218473
Location: Playford
Area: 4.6 ha
Date: 29/09/2009
Recorder: Penny Hemphill
Weather conditions: Sunny, clear and warm
Ranking: 2
Conservation Value: High conservation value

Map



Crown Copyright Licence Number 10016410

Photographs



Lux wood: mature beech and young sycamore



Woodland ride which is also a public footpath

Habitat Types:

Ancient broad-leaf woodland, river, scrub

Subsidiary Habitats:

Lying and standing dead wood, woodland ride

Site Description:

This deciduous ancient wood supports a wide range of tree species, including beech, oak, elm, sycamore, wild cherry and hornbeam. Small areas of hazel and small-leaved lime can also be found. Dutch elm disease has affected part of the wood, although suckering elm re-growth is evident in places. The understorey is composed of hazel, elder, hawthorn and bramble.

According to the existing citation 'wood anemone together with bluebell, primrose and sweet violet provide a wonderful show in the Spring. Lux Wood is also an important site for birds.

Nightingale and blackcap are amongst the breeding birds and hawfinch is a frequent visitor to the wood.'

Protected Species:

Badger *Meles meles*

Protected Species Potential

Bats

BAP Habitats Present

Lowland mixed deciduous woodland

BAP Species Seen

BAP Species known

BAP Species Potential

Bats

Connectivity

Good. The woodland is located in the Fynn river valley to the south of the railway line and provides a link to surrounding arable land via hedges and ditches.

Structural Diversity

Good structural diversity with a dense canopy of mature trees, numerous young saplings, scrub and an understorey of ivy and spring flowering species.

Flora:

The timing of this survey put constraints on the botanical assessment of this site with regard to spring plants. The following species were recorded: nettle *Urtica dioica*, , oak *Quercus robur*, ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, hazel *Corylus avellana*, elder *Sambucus nigra*, spear thistle *Cirsium vulgare*, bramble *Rubus fruticosus*, creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense*, sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus*, holly *Ilex aquifolium*, hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, ivy *Hedera helix*, ground ivy *Glechoma hederacea*, elm *Ulmus procera*, beech *Fagus sylvatica*, cherry *Prunus avium* and cocksfoot *Dactylis glomerata*.

Avifauna:

It was too late in the season for a breeding bird survey. The woodland provides potential breeding habitat for resident and migrant species.

Invertebrate:

The site provides good habitat for a variety of invertebrate groups including *Coleoptera* and *Lepitoptera* along the woodland ride.

Herpetofauna:

-

Mammals:

Rabbit *Oryctolagus cuniculus*, fox *Vulpes vulpes*, grey squirrel *Sciurus carolinensis*.

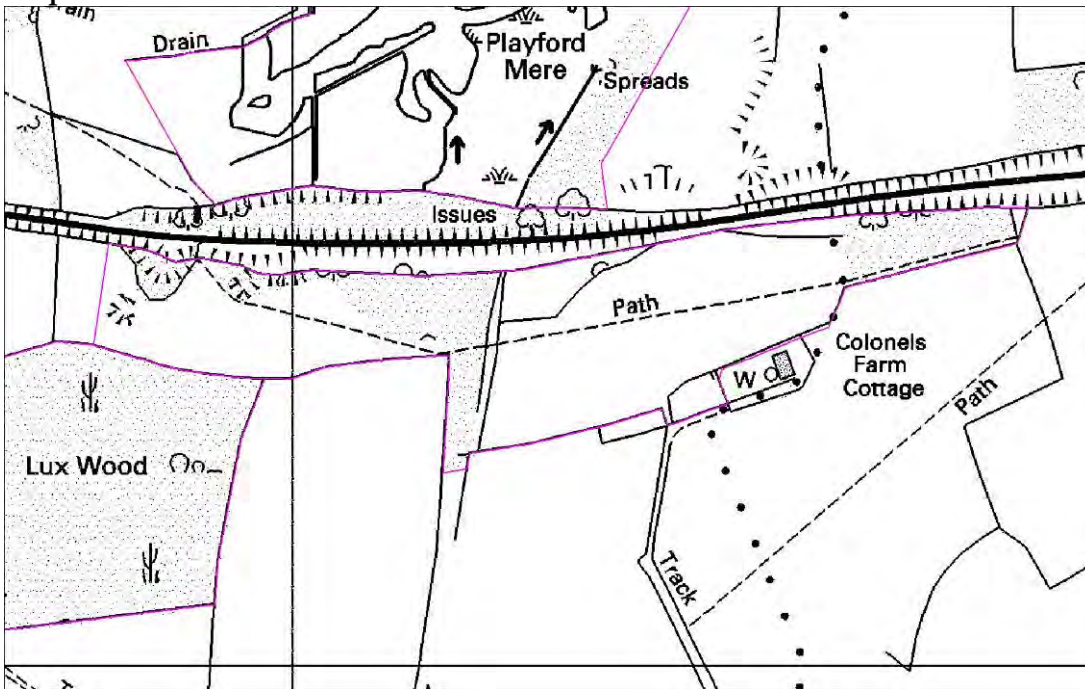
Comments & Recommendations

The woodland is used as pheasant cover and there are structures within the woodland to house and feed game birds. The ride is obviously used as a farm track and is also a public footpath. It is recommended that a site visit is made in May to assess the spring and early summer flora.

Pogson's Farm Meadows

Site Status: County Wildlife Site
Grid Ref: TM 221473
Location: Playford
Area: 38.5 ha
Date: 30/09/2009
Recorder: Penny Hemphill
Weather conditions: Cloud with sunny intervals, still
Ranking: 2
Conservation Value: High conservation value

Map



Crown Copyright Licence Number 10016410

Photographs



Sheep grazed, drought stricken meadows



Marshy area – access not possible



Sweet chestnut pollard with Playford Mere CWS sand martin cliff in the background

Habitat Types:

Lowland meadow, scrub, mature trees

Subsidiary Habitats:

Standing dead wood,

Site Description:

This site consists of herb-rich grazed meadows with areas of gorse and bramble scrub especially on the margins, remnant hedges, wetter areas and some planted trees. The trees planted in one corner include sweet chestnut, silver birch, larch and pine and the old hedges are dominated by hawthorn with ash, holly, sycamore and some elm stumps. An old oak and sweet chestnut pollard are pleasing features. A wide variety of grasses grow in the meadows reflecting the unimproved nature of the grasslands however at the time of the survey the meadows had been grazed by sheep. A previous description of the species present in these meadows include 'sweet vernal grass, crested dog's-tail, meadow foxtail, timothy and red fescue. The meadow also supports ragged robin, greater bird's-foot trefoil, sorrel, fleabane, sheep's sorrel, pignut, heath bedstraw and lady's bedstraw among many other species. The very wet areas add further variety with several rushes and horsetails, brooklime, and in open water, lesser water parsnip, watercress and duckweed are present'. Overall, these meadows are a fine example of an increasingly scarce habitat in Suffolk.

Protected Species:

Badger *Meles meles*

Protected Species Potential

Grass snake *Natrix natrix*, barn owl *Tyto alba*, slow worm *Anguis fragilis*, common lizard *Lacerta vivipara*, bats

BAP Habitats Present

Lowland meadow

BAP Species Seen

-

BAP Species known

BAP Species Potential

Bats, grass snake, slow worm, common lizard, barn owl

Connectivity

The railway line makes up the northern boundary of this site, and to the south-east Lux Wood CWS is immediately adjacent. These habitats are connected to the surrounding intensively farmed arable land by hedges and ditches. Playford Mere CWS is immediately opposite this site to the north of the railway line.

Structural Diversity

Good structural diversity with mature trees, hedges, scrub, grassland and areas of wet grassland.

Flora:

Overgrazing by sheep and drought conditions put constraints on the botanical assessment of this site. The following species were recorded: Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus*, creeping bent *Agrostis stolonifera*, cocksfoot *Dactylis glomerata*, false oat grass *Arrhenatherum elatius*, smooth meadow grass *Poa pratensis*, creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense*, creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens*, nettle *Urtica dioica*, great horsetail *Equisetum telmateia*, alder *Alnus glutinosa*, hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*, bramble *Rubus fruticosus*, dog rose *Rosa canina*, elm *Ulmus procera*, ivy *Hedera helix*, hazel *Corylus avellana*, oak *Quercus robur*, elder *Sambucus nigra*, blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*, curled dock *Rumex crispus*, alder *Alnus glutinosa*, sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus*, bracken *Pteridium aquilinum*, great willowherb *Epilobium hirsutum*, ash *Fraxinus excelsior*, ground ivy *Glechoma hederacea*, broad leaved dock *Rumex obtusifolius*, gorse *Ulex europaeus*, Scots pine *Pinus sylvestris*, silver birch *Betula pendula*, sweet chestnut *Castanea sativa*, London plane *Platanus x hybrida*, holly *Ilex aquifolium*, hogweed *Heracleum sphondylium*.

Avifauna:

It was too late in the season for a breeding bird survey however surrounding hedges and scrub provide good habitat for birds. Wood pigeon *Columba oenas*, crow *Corvus corone corone*, tawny owl *Strix aluco*, buzzard *Buteo buteo*, crow *Corvus corone corone*, robin *Erithacus rubecula*, pheasant *Phasianus colchicus*.

Invertebrate:

The site provides habitat for *Lepidoptera* and *Odonata* species however none were recorded. *Orthoptera* were heard in the grassland but not seen.

Herpetofauna:

The site provides potential habitat reptiles.

Mammals:

Rabbit *Oryctolagus cuniculus*, fox *Vulpes vulpes*

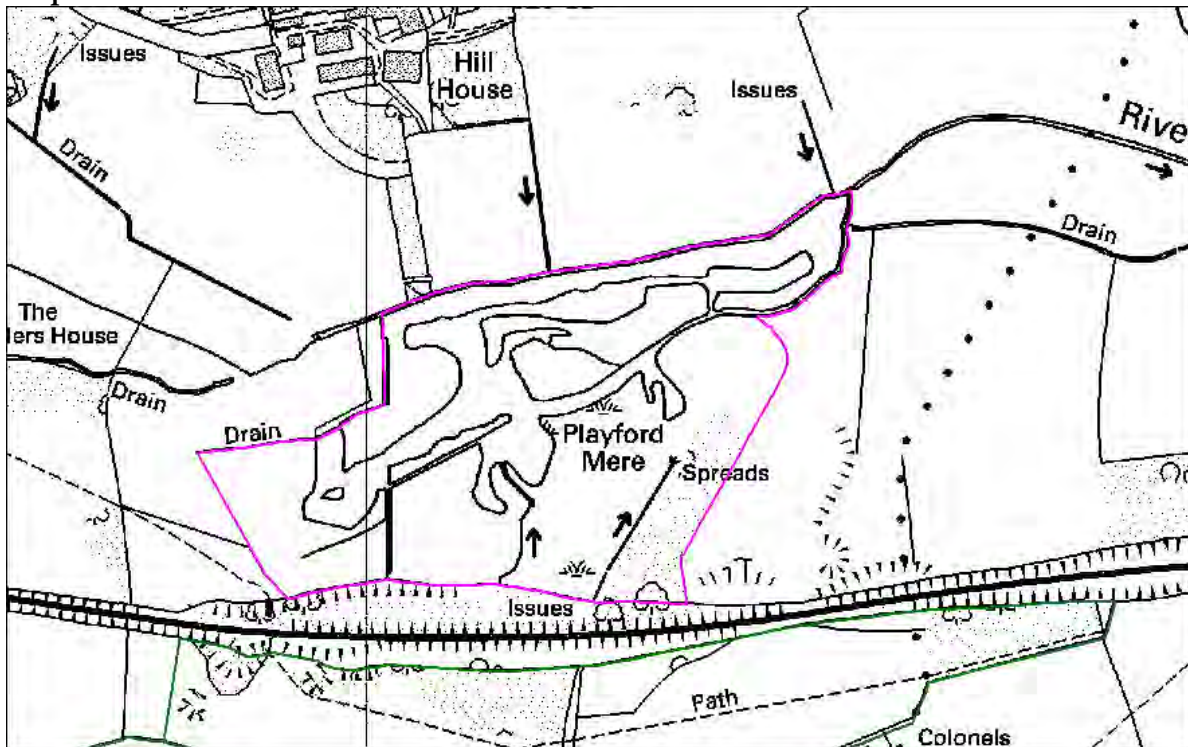
Comments & Recommendations

Further botanical survey of this site is recommended in the spring to assess the floristic diversity of the meadows. The meadows are grazed by sheep and along with the current drought, there was little vegetation possible to identify (see photograph). The site was assessed from the public footpath only as landowner permission was not given. It is an ideal site for a barn owl box.

Playford Mere

Site Status: County Wildlife Site
Grid Ref: TM 222474
Area: 8.3 ha
Location: Playford
Date: 28/09/2009
Recorder: Penny Hemphill
Weather conditions: Low cloud cover, cool
Ranking: 2
Conservation Value: High conservation value

Map



Crown Copyright Licence Number 10016410

Photographs



Fringe of sedge and willow scrub on an island



Sand martin cliff



Playford Mere: view from the railway embankment showing new pond in foreground

Habitat Types:

Open water, river, unimproved rough grassland, scrub, acid grassland

Subsidiary Habitats:

Standing dead wood, sand cliff, ditch

Site Description:

Playford Mere is situated south of the River Fynn and north of the railway line. The site consists of a number of artificial water-bodies linked by a series of channels and areas of tall fen vegetation interspersed with willow scrub and poplar plantation. This site is a mosaic of undisturbed habitats which provide a valuable refuge for wildlife particularly birds, invertebrates and mammals, in an otherwise intensively farmed landscape. A sand cliff for sand martins has been recently constructed.

Protected Species:

Otter *Lutra lutra*, water vole *Arvicola terrestris*, barn owl *Tyto alba*, water shrew *Neomys fodiens*, badger *Meles meles*, bats (species unknown)

Protected Species Potential

White-clawed crayfish *Austropotamobius pallipes*

BAP Habitats Present

Acid grassland

BAP Species Seen

BAP Species known

Otter, water vole, barn owl, water shrew

BAP Species Potential

Slow worm *Anguis fragilis*, common lizard *Lacerta vivipara*, grass snake *Natrix natrix*, bats, toad *Bufo bufo*

Connectivity

Excellent. The site is in the Fynn river valley which consists of a series of water meadows each side of the river with woodland, scrub, hedges and ditches linking it to the surrounding arable land. It is located beside the River Fynn and is part of a series of meadows which extend the length of the valley from Tuddenham and beyond Playford. There are some substantial areas of woodland and the meadows are connected by hedges and ditches. The River Fynn provides an excellent wildlife corridor especially for otter and water vole.

Structural Diversity

Excellent structural diversity with mature trees, scrub, tall fen vegetation, rough grassland and short rabbit grazed acid grassland.

Flora:

Species recorded include: Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus*, false oat grass *Arrhenatherum elatius*, creeping bent *Agrostis stolonifera*, creeping thistle *Cirsium arvense*, ground ivy *Glechoma hederacea*, common fleabane *Pulicaria dysenterica*, willow *Salix* spp, yarrow *Achillea millefolium*, bittersweet *Solanum dulcamara*, red fescue *Festuca rubra*, reedmace *Typha latifolia*, prickly sow-thistle *Sonchus asper*, great horsetail *Equestum telmateia*, creeping buttercup *Ranunculus repens*, soft rush *Juncus effusus*, hard rush *Juncus inflexus*, common ragwort *Senecio jacobaea*, great willowherb *Epilobium hirsutum*, water mint *Mentha aquatica*, nettle *Urtica dioica*, cocksfoot *Dactylis glomerata*, bramble *Rubus fruticosus*, oak *Quercus robur*, elder *Sambucus nigra*, blackthorn *Prunus spinosa*, curled dock *Rumex crispus*, field bindweed *Convolvulus arvensis*, alder *Alnus glutinosa*, redshank *Polygonum persicaria*, meadowsweet *Filipendula ulmaria*, hemp agrimony *Eupatorium cannabinum*, Iris *Iris pseudacorus*, sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus*, bracken *Pteridium aquilinum*, sheep's sorrel *Rumex acetosella*, lichen species *Cladonia* spp, mouse-ear hawkweed *Pilosella officinarum*, sand sedge *Carex arenaria*, common bent *Agrostis capillaris*, lesser pond sedge *Carex acutiformis*, spear thistle *Cirsium vulgare*, broad leaved dock *Rumex obtusifolius*, bramble *Rubus fruticosus*, lesser burdock *Arctium minus*, hemlock *Conium maculatum*, bristly ox-tongue *Picris echioides*, gorse *Ulex europaeus*, branched bur-reed *Sparganium erectum*, Indian balsam *Impatiens glandulifera*.

Avifauna:

It was too late in the season for a breeding bird survey however the landowner has kept a record of some species which have visited this site during the last year. The mature trees, scrub and tall marshy vegetation provide excellent habitat for resident and migrant species. Species recorded during the survey: blackbird *Turdus merula*, robin *Erithacus rubecula*, blue tit *Parus caeruleus*, crow *Corvus corone corone*, wood pigeon *Columba palumbus*, wren *Troglodytes troglodytes*, hobby *Falco subbuteo*, reed warbler *Acrocephalus scirpaceus*, sedge warbler *Acrocephalus schoenobaenus*, mute swan *Cygnus olor*, moorhen *Gallinula chloropus*, magpie *Pica pica*, kestrel *Falco tinnunculus*, Cetti's warbler *Cettia cetti*, mallard *Anas platyrhynchos*, common gull *Larus canus*, greylag goose *Anser anser*, Canada goose *Branta Canadensis*, barn owl, sand martin *Riparia riparia*.

Invertebrate:

The site provides excellent habitat for the groups *Lepidoptera*, *Odonata* and *Orthoptera*. Weather conditions were unsuitable for these groups on the day of the survey however the landowner has records of the following butterflies: painted lady *Cynthia (Vanessa) cardui*, small tortoiseshell *Aglais urticae*, red admiral *Vanessa atalanta*, peacock *Inachis io*, small white *Pieris rapae*, large white *Pieris brassicae*, green veined white *Pieris napi* and speckled wood *Pararge aegeria*.

Herpetofauna:

The site provides potential habitat for slow worm, common lizard and grass snake. The landowner has requested a reptile survey is carried out next year.

Mammals:

Rabbit *Oryctolagus cuniculus*, fox *Vulpes vulpes*, field vole *Microtus agrestis*, mole *Talpa europaea*, Reeve's muntjac *Muntiacus reeves*, grey squirrel *Sciurus carolinensis*.

Comments & Recommendations

The exceptional conservation value of this site has continued to evolve over the years and is entirely due to the commitment of the landowner. The site has regularly mown grass tracks around its perimeter and the rough grass areas are cut twice a year. The existing water-bodies were de-silted four years ago, and an additional pond area has been created this year, which is linked to the existing ponds by a wide dyke. Otter and water vole are regularly seen and three mink have been trapped this year. The River Fynn to the north of the mere is choked by branched bur-reed. There is a barn owl box and one chick was successfully reared this year. There is also a kestrel box which has been used by a breeding pair for the past three years. A hobby is regularly observed swooping over the mere feeding on dragonflies and damselflies. The sand martin cliff, which was created a few years ago has proved a success with the number of sand martins nesting increasing each year.